

# **INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

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**Abstract:** Human resource management involves a dual approach, functioning as a tool and at the same time as an end in itself. The current global financial and economic crisis has required a continuous review and adaptation of the way human resource management is perceived and implemented, in light of the changes and challenges of today's reality. In the Romanian public sector, greater attention is paid to the strategic management of human resources, which contributes to achieving synergies. No mission, purpose or task of a public institution can be achieved alone; these are achieved through the contribution of the employed staff. In every public institution, the human factor is decisive for the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities carried out and, at the same time, influences the perceived reputation of the institution in the community. Therefore, organizational strategy must pay crucial attention to HR strategy.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the public institutions of our country, recently, increased attention is paid to the strategic management of human resources, which participates in obtaining synergistic effects. No mission, purpose or task of the public institution can be achieved by itself, but they are achieved through and with the help of the staff employed. In any public institution, the human factor determines the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities carried out and, at the same time, participates in the image that the public institution has in the eyes of the community. In this context, the institutional strategy requires a key aspect in the personnel strategy.

Most managers will be tempted to say that there are human resource management policies in the organizations they lead, but if they are asked to describe their nature and content, there will be plenty of situations where they will have difficulty. In general, human resource management policies should be known to anyone with managerial duties and responsibilities, even if they are not always written. Where there are trade union structures at the organization level, these policies will be included as mandatory clauses in the collective labor agreement. These clauses will

cover important aspects of human resource management: starting from the employment of the individual, continuing with his training and promotion and ending with the fair treatment of each person. Human resource management policy reflects the intentions, skills and objectives of management in the field of procurement, retention and development of human resources (Halloran, 2006). In order to avoid any overlap between the skills that human resources generate, people who have the responsibility of management must know from the very beginning what the area of coverage of those skills is. In this regard, the forecasting, planning and adoption of personnel policy, both short-term and long-term, fall under the responsibility of the general manager or senior managers (if applicable).

The decisions they make are substantiated based on the analyzes carried out by the special department dedicated to human resources (Druker, 2005). At the same time, the staff employed in this department also takes care of the current organization and administration of personnel activities. The human resources department is tasked with a whole series of responsibilities divided into major areas of activity such as: organization, human resources assurance, human resources development, rewards management, relations with employees and occupational safety and health. These areas are what characterize the very modern conception of human resource management. At the same time, in addition to the major areas of activity, it is also important to emphasize the activities that the human resources department carries out.

Human resources management is a permanent component of society, being closely related to the factors of everyday existence. This is because the majority of the population is interested in and responsible for their own livelihood, the evolution and degree of well-being of their lives and their families, the opportunities, but also the shortcomings of the entire mechanism that influences the management of recruitment and selection of human resources. Constitutive part in the manifestation of social policies both at the level of a state and the geopolitical context, the management of human resources represents those sets of measures that generate the assurance and evolution of the well-being of a nation but also of its citizens, the elimination of poverty, the creation and maintenance of a stable society, sustaining a high standard of living. Human resource management has a dual approach, it is both a tool and an end in itself. The financial and economic crisis that the whole world is going through at the moment has determined and forced that the perception and manifestation of human resources management be revised and adapted on the fly to the changes and challenges of reality.

In the context of the current reality, the management of human resources is the most important dimension of work with direct and immediate consequences in all the development plans of society. The profound changes and transformations that take place day by day at the level of current times that bring with them changes in technique, technologies that impose new forms of work organization, access or consolidation strategies, sometimes extremely aggressive, have polished and essentialized the strategies of knowledge and manifestation of human resources recruitment and selection management. Taking as a starting point the specialized literature in the field of human resources management and joining them to our own research efforts, this doctoral thesis proposes a holistic vision of the professional career.

## 2. SPECIALTY LITERATURE

The competence of the public administration bodies is manifested in the form of attributions, prerogatives, based on which public authorities and institutions can solve a certain problem, perform certain actions and take certain decisions. The civil service is regulated by a statute and its content is an expression of the principle of legality of public administration. The statute of civil servants constitutes a set of legal norms that establish the legal status of civil servants and regulate their responsibilities and attributions. Public office represents an objective legal situation, a set of duties and responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities of the public office are established with the help of the law or the normative acts that are issued pursuant to the law and are common either to all public officials or to officials in the same category of persons occupying a position of the same nature, as the case may be (Gasnier, 2002).

A certain number of duties having a common specific activity and carried out by the same civil servant, define the notion of job. Public authorities and institutions comprise a number of positions established by law. The nature of the positions as well as their number depend on: the importance of the public administration body; the type of activity of each public entity; its territorial jurisdiction; technical and financial means made available to him; the need for human resources; political will; the number and extent of public services provided and the attributions established by law for the public administration body (De Cenzo and Robbins, 1988). The duties specific to the public office are exercised without interruption, having a permanent character. These powers must be exercised whenever the conditions required by law are met for the exercise of the competence of civil servants within public administration authorities. In order to ensure this continuity of the exercise of these duties, the stability of officials in occupying and exercising public functions is necessary (Aktouf, 2004).

Civil servants exercise their duties specific to the position they occupy in order to achieve the public interest, serving the public service, which is also the purpose of the existence of the public office. The civil service was regulated to ensure a legal, established, professional, transparent, efficient and impartial public service, in the interest of citizens as well as public authorities and institutions in the central and local public administration. Public officials represent the agents of the public authority through which public services achieve the purpose for which they were created and function, namely the satisfaction of the general, lawful, moral needs of the members of the state society (Gasnier, 2002). Knowing and understanding how human resource management has evolved over time is particularly important to know its current dimension. Over time, various stages of development have been identified, representing stages in the evolution of human resources management. At the same time, these stages led to a whole series of debates among specialists, often contradictory, the reason being the criteria considered in identifying these periods (Cadin, 2019).

Human resources management is characterized by complex activities, due on the one hand to the special nature of those who participate in work processes and, on the other hand, to the interpenetration of these activities with other activities specific to organizational management. At the same time, the external environment of the organization, through the changes imposed by it, causes internal changes, in many areas, including personnel. Personnel changes determine a new positioning of the organization by establishing new performance objects or other modified offerings for the existing market (Hubaul, 2017).

At the same time, a direct consequence of the economic, social, cultural, environmental and even political transformations is given by the radical transformations that the specific activities of human resources management involve. In this sense, the most complete identification of the impact that the employees' contribution has on the overall development of the organization is sought, as well as the knowledge of their involvement in the adoption and implementation of managerial decisions (Myers, 2014). The ever-increasing development of transnational organizations requires the modification of personnel policies, in the sense of their managerial openness in order to satisfy the social needs of the personnel that are becoming more and more sophisticated and diversified and to ensure the ever-increasing mobility of the personnel. Employees cannot be considered as an exclusive asset of an organization.

The investments made for the personal development and professional training of employees can be found at the level of other organizations, and in this way the managers are the ones who have the obligation to ensure and facilitate, as the case may be, their mobility, so that all parties involved have earned (Myers, 2014).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

Methodology is the general way of conducting scientific reflection. It can be defined as the study of the methods used throughout the research, which give relevance and validity to the knowledge development process. The research method represents a set of rules, canons, principles that the researcher follows, or should follow, to move from empirical data to theory and vice versa, in order to discover and demonstrate scientific truth. Research in the social and human sciences is based on a mix of methods that combine quantitative methods of investigation (statistical methods, non-parametric tests, variance analysis, linear regression, logistic regression, discriminant analysis, etc.) with qualitative ones: surveys, studies case, action research, participatory observation, discourse analysis, symbolic interactionism, etc. The quantitative investigation was carried out on the basis of an evaluation questionnaire, as the main tool used, addressed to employees at all hierarchical levels in Romanian public institutions.

The questionnaires used in scientific research as an analysis tool are constructed in such a way that, through the statements they contain, they allow the evaluation of the impact of public relations within the public administration in motivating staff and leaders in the management of public organizations, apply the characteristics of the economy and the organization based on knowledge and the impact of its application on the performance of the organizations to which the respondents belong.

By means of this research, the achievement of a main objective is aimed at, namely the way of manifestation of the employees of the public system and the management of the public institution through the prism of the relationship with customers, the work motivation of civil servants and the implemented leadership techniques. The achievement of the general objective aims to:

1. Identification of the client / partner / employee relationship.
2. Identifying the attitude of public system resources towards the reward system.
3. Observing the extent to which workplace safety contributes to employee motivation.
4. Knowing the percentage of respondents for whom the work climate is a motivating factor.
5. Analysis of the implementation of leadership in institutions.

The methods identified to achieve the general objective are:

✓ creation of a more efficient and effective public administration for the socioeconomic benefit of the population;

✓ increasing the skills of human resources in public institutions in Romania, together with an improvement in workplace efficiency and increasing the degree of responsibility and professionalism of public administration staff;

✓ streamlining internal activity, as well as offering modern, quality services in public institutions in Romania;

✓ highlighting the importance of leadership for a public institution, as well as presenting the correspondence link that exists between the client and the employee in fulfilling the goals of the respective organization;

✓ demonstrating, on the one hand, the link between the strengthening of the institutional relationship - the capacity of the public administration and the reform of these institutions, and on the other hand, the link between the management and the competences for which they were established;

✓ ensuring the improvement of the quality of the services offered by the HRM, ensuring that the staff within the concerned institutions can fulfill their responsibilities.

For the choice of public institutions to be part of the research field, their concerns for promoting motivational strategies with a particular impact on organizational performance were used as a criterion. On the other hand, the degree of accessibility to the organization's information and their degree of availability to allow employees to participate in the research were taken into account. 50 local public institutions in Romania were requested to participate in the scientific approach, only 43 (86%) responded.

The sampling action consisted in selecting a sample of people whose characteristics are known in order to extrapolate to the entire population of the studied sector. A combination of probabilistic/random sampling methods was used for this purpose:

- the group sampling method, that is, the 860 people established were divided into two groups: the group of managers (215 people) and the group of operational staff (645 people). The recommendation was kept that in the case of group discussions, the participants do not know each other beforehand.

- systematic random sampling method, using the measurement step established by relating the total number of personnel of the organization to the desired sample size. Considering that there are two groups of respondents (managers and operational staff) and that all local public institutions in Romania included in the target group exceed the minimum number of 70 people, the following steps were established:

- the measurement step for operational staff was "5"

- measurement step for managers was "2"

In order to carry out the analysis of the improvement of human resources within the local public administration institutions in Romania, we conducted an opinion survey among officials in management positions, as well as among officials in these public institutions in executive positions who meet the necessary conditions for employment management positions.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major theme was aimed at knowing the way of expressing public relations within local public institutions. In this regard, the 215 managerial respondents and the 645 operative personal respondents had to answer 15 questions, which mainly concerned the following aspects:

- ✓ the current image of the institution in relation to the citizens who access the services offered;
- ✓ is the behavior of each employee influenced by customer feedback? ;
- ✓ the contribution of the partnerships concluded by the institution in relation to the activity carried out by the employees; ✓ analysis of the motivational system within the organization;
- ✓ evaluation of the way of communication between different levels of the public administration, between the administration and the social executive or between the administration and the political authority;
- ✓ analysis of the aspects of the communication process with the management of the organization;
- ✓ the leader's concerns regarding the language used in the institution; ✓ extent to which good management can contribute to strengthening the image of the institution;
- ✓ the need to obtain feedback after interacting with customers;
- ✓ the analysis of some aspects that can influence the communication process, in the relationship with citizens, in the relationship with the management of the institution, in the relationship with colleagues, in the relationship with mass media;
- ✓ the link between the degree of customer satisfaction and the degree of employee motivation.

***Q1. How do you assess the current image of the institution in relation to the citizens who access the services offered? Communication of information to customers***

The first question of the section on public relations within local public institutions was dedicated to knowing the degree of appreciation of the image of public institutions in Romania in relation to the citizens who access the services offered by them. From the analysis of the data presented in the table, respectively in the graph, below, it is easy to see that for the 215 manager respondents the communication of information to customers is very important (32.1% of the total manager respondents). The same cannot be said about operative personnel respondents, who in a proportion of 27.1% consider this communication with clients to be unimportant or totally unimportant (Table 1).

**Table 1. Centralizing table with the frequency of responses regarding the communication of information to clients**

	Totally unimportant	Unimportant	Indifference	Importance	Very important	I don't know	I do not answer	Total
Managers	29	32	42	20	69	8	15	215
	13,5%	14,9%	19,5%	9,3%	32,1%	3,7%	7%	100%
Operational staff	89	150	161	69	73	50	53	645
	13,8%	23,3%	25%	10,7%	11,3%	7,8%	8,2%	100%
Total	118	182	203	89	142	58	68	860
	13,7%	21,2%	23,6%	10,3%	16,5%	6,7%	7,9%	100%

*Source: developed by the author*

***Q2. How do you assess the current image of the institution in relation to the citizens who access the services offered? Response time to notices and subpoenas***

More than 50% of all managerial respondents believe that the response time to notifications and summonses received at local public administration institutions in the North-East Region are important and very important, compared to operative personnel respondents who appreciate the same to a much lesser extent, only 21.9% of their total (Table 2).

**Table 2. Centralizing table with the frequency of responses**

	Totally unimportant	Unimportant	Indifference	Importance	Very important	I don't know	I do not answer	Total
Managers	21	16	39	18	100	9	12	215
	9,8%	7,4%	18,1%	8,4%	46,5%	4,2%	5,6%	100%
Operational staff	86	153	172	72	69	47	46	645
	13,3%	23,7%	26,7%	11,2%	10,7%	7,3%	7,1%	100%
Total	107	169	211	90	169	56	58	860
	12,4%	19,7%	24,5%	10,5%	19,7%	6,5%	6,7%	100%

*Source: developed by the author*

***Q3. How do you assess the current image of the institution in relation to the citizens who access the services offered? Accessibility of information***

All the manager respondents are those who are concerned with the best possible image of the institution in relation to the citizens, i.e. accessibility to information is considered as having an important role, in proportion to 49.8% of their total. For operative personal respondents, the highest percentage of answers was for the indifferent option, followed by unimportant (26.5%), respectively totally unimportant (11.3%) - Table 3.

**Table 3. Centralizing table with response frequency**

	Totally unimportant	Unimportant	Indifference	Importance	Very important	I don't know	I do not answer	Total
Managers	18	27	41	26	81	11	11	215
	8,4	12,6	19,1	12,1	37,7	5,1	5,1	100%
Operational staff	73	171	192	62	53	51	43	645
	11,3	26,5	29,8	9,6	8,2	7,9	6,7	100%
Total	91	198	233	88	134	62	54	860
	10,6	23	27,1	10,2	15,6	7,2	6,3	100%

Source: developed by the author

#### ***Q4. To what extent is each employee's behavior influenced by customer feedback?***

For 41.7% of all operational staff respondents, feedback from customers does not influence their behavior, compared to managerial respondents, who state, in proportion to 41.4%, that it is very important to adjust their behavior accordingly of this feedback received as a result of an interaction between citizens and the local public institution in which they operate (Table 4).

**Table 4. Pivot table with the frequency of responses regarding the influence of feedback**

	Totally unimportant	Unimportant	Indifference	Importance	Very important	I don't know	I do not answer	Total
Managers	29	42	21	16	73	21	13	215
	13,5%	19,5%	9,8%	7,4%	34%	9,8%	6%	100%
Operational staff	88	181	162	72	65	41	36	645
	13,6%	28,1%	25,1%	11,2%	10,1%	6,4%	5,6%	100%
Total	117	223	183	88	138	62	49	860
	13,6%	25,9%	21,3%	10,2%	16%	7,2%	5,7%	100%

Source: developed by the author

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

Following the analysis of the answers received for the major theme: Public relations within local public institutions, the following intermediate conclusions are formulated:

More than 50% of all managerial respondents believe that the response time to notifications and summonses received at local public administration institutions is important and very important, compared to operative personal respondents who appreciate the same thing in a much lower proportion, only 21.9% from their total. Managerial respondents are those who are concerned with the best possible image of the institution in relation to the citizens, respectively the accessibility of information is considered as having an important role, in proportion of 49.8% of their total. For operative personnel respondents, the highest percentage of answers was for the indifferent option, followed by unimportant (26.5%), respectively totally unimportant (11.3%).



For 41.7% of all operational staff respondents, feedback from customers does not influence their behavior, compared to manager respondents, who state, in proportion to 41.4%, that it is very important to adjust their behavior accordingly of this feedback received following an interaction between citizens and the local public institution in which they operate. The partnerships concluded by public institutions with private companies are important for their activity, according to the opinions of 44.2% of all the managerial respondents. Partnerships concluded with other public institutions also support the activity of local public administration institutions, this is the opinion of 42.5% of all manager respondents.

The importance of the motivation that comes when personal merits are recognized and appreciated at their true value is noted. At the level of local public institutions, communication between the different levels of local administration is very important, according to the opinions expressed by the managerial respondents, respectively those from the operational staff category.

In the process of communication with the management of the institution, both the managerial respondents and those from the operational staff category, believe that the emotional state of the receiver is very important. Managerial respondents believe that in the relationship with the mass media, regarding communication, the emotional state of the interlocutor and the language used, the routine the official is used to, the emotional state of the receiver and the receiver's lack of interest in the message are very important.

To a very large extent, in the view of the managerial respondents, there is a link between the degree of customer satisfaction and the degree of employee motivation. The most important aspects regarding the behavior of the managerial respondents are the following: the need to adapt the message to the characteristics of the target audience, the need to control the understanding of the message communicated to the client, the realization of multiple activities communicated by the management during the interaction with a client, while for the operational personnel category the hierarchy is as follows: increasing internal safety and employee satisfaction with the help of correct and timely feed-back, the need to adapt the message to the characteristics of the target audience, carrying out multiple activities communicated by management during interaction with a customer.

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