RECRUITMENTOF JOB CANDIDATES AS AN ELEMENT OF BUILDING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

PhD Anna Sobczak

Prof. Janusz Soboń

The Jacob of Paradies University Gorzow, Poland

Abstract: The recruitment process, where the employer is looking for an employee, is also an area where candidates are looking for a place of employment. And so each of these parties has something to offer, but also has certain requirements and expectations. In order for the recruitment process to be effective and according to plan, it has to be fully thought through. The employer cannot afford too large, but also too small a group of candidates. This leads either to a significant increase in costs and labour intensity of the process, or insufficient competition among candidates. Due to the shortage of labour force in Poland, finding an employee is a difficult task. A significant barrier is the level of qualifications of this group of people. The employer is looking for an individual whose skills are suitable for a particular position. Employing incompetent people could have serious consequences for the company. The expectation is therefore: to employ the right number of people, in the right positions, at the right time and at an acceptable cost.

Key words: building competitive, advantage, significant barrier

I. ESSENCE AND FUNCTIONS OF RECRUITMENT

In a situation of staff shortage or their insufficient efficiency, or failure to achieve the company's objectives, it turns out that it is necessary to take such steps that will prove satisfactory from the point of view of the company. For this purpose, the recruitment process is carried out. The essence of this process can be defined as

a range of activities of the organization on the internal or external labour market aimed at informing potential candidates about the possibility and conditions of work in a particular company and striving to shape positive attitudes towards the possibility of employment there [Kostera]. Thus, recruitment means the process of searching by the organisation for candidates interested in filling the offered positions, who will meet the assumed criteria [Szczupaczyński]. So there are two poles of this activity. Properly conducted recruitment fulfils certain functions:

- ➢ informational function,
- ➢ motivational function,
- ➢ self-selection function,
- ➢ marketing function [Golnau].

The first of these is the most important. The information function of recruitment consists of preparing information that a given company is looking for an employee/s for a given position/s. Already at this stage, the information contained, candidates must decide whether to apply to that company or not. It is conceivable that the company may withhold certain information, such as the name of the company, in situations where there may be shareholder disquiet, unmasking by competitors or panic among existing employees, or a lack of reputation. The job offer should, above all, be easy to understand and read, so it is advisable to include only the most relevant information. The motivational function is to encourage the potential candidate to apply for the position. This is mainly achieved by including information about the benefits to which the employee is entitled. Sometimes special visual effects are also used to attract the attention of the applicant to the advertisement. Another is the self-selection function, also known as pre-selection. It is the candidates who assess their suitability for the vacant position on the basis of the content of the advertisement. Therefore, it is worthwhile to include in the offer a list of desired skills, tasks to be performed and working conditions. An interesting

procedure is to check the applicant's knowledge already at this stage, for example by using a special nomenclature in the ad to discourage uninvited candidates.   The last marketing function has another dimension. It does not serve recruitment directly. However, it shapes the image of the company. A job offer, if it contains positive information about the company and its employees, may be favourably received by business partners, social organisations or customers themselves and bring additional benefits to the company.

II. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESSES

We already know that the purpose of recruitment is to fill vacancies with the right candidates. However, once they are hired, we cannot say how they will perform in their jobs. The effectiveness of recruitment is therefore assessed after a certain period of time. That is, after the accepted employees have proved themselves or not. We list several factors on which this effectiveness depends:

➢ accuracy of recognition and definition of the real personnel needs of the company,

➢ accuracy of defining, from the point of view of human resources needs of the company, professional skills and psychological features of candidates,

➢ effectiveness in reaching the right candidates,

➢ accuracy of recognition and assessment of skills and qualities of candidates,

➢ accuracy of the decision to select the most appropriate of the potential candidates [Suchar].

There are two considerations here. First: the effectiveness of recruitment is a product function of all the factors listed. These factors are interrelated, so one weakness in one factor is enough to make the whole recruitment process less effective. Second: some factors result from others. Thus, the accuracy of the

definition of the candidate profile depends on the diagnosis of staffing needs. The accuracy of the candidates' assessment, on the other hand, has a bearing on the final outcome, as long as you have effectively reached out to them beforehand. Below we distinguish 4 stages of recruitment and selection activities.

Stage I. Initial stage of recruitment. Here the needs are identified and the requirements to the candidate are defined, as well as the goal and the direction of the activity.

Stage II. Stage of proper recruitment. Finding or reaching the right candidate.

Stage III. Stage of selection activities. Assessment of the suitability of candidates is carried out here, thus providing the basis for the selection of the most suitable candidates for the position.   Stage IV. Final stage. Decision to select the right candidate [Suchar].

Each of the stages listed is important and their occurrence is justified. None of them should be overlooked, yet in practice the initial stage is often not used. This is a mistake, as it constitutes the basis for rational recruitment management. Only accurate identification of the company's needs in terms of human resources will translate into the success of the final stage and the entire recruitment process.

Diagnosis of human resources needs

Before starting recruitment activities, each company should examine and determine its staffing needs. A thorough analysis of the current state of labour resources is the starting point for needs planning and forms the basis for potential restructuring projects [Sajkiewicz]. In fact, it may happen that the recruitment of new employees will not solve the problem at all, and may even make it worse. Therefore, the key question in this situation is: if and which position should be filled? It is easier when we have an already existing vacant position to fill, worse when we have to design a new position and thus the scope of responsibilities,

working conditions and so on. Whatever the situation, however, we must carry out an analysis of each job. This allows us to determine whether the existence of a given position is necessary and economically justified. An accurate diagnosis of the company's personnel needs is important both for the general interest of the company and from a practical point of view. An incorrectly diagnosed need is much more difficult to satisfy effectively. For this purpose it is recommended to diagnose four steps of the company's needs [Sajkiewicz]. And so:

1. job description, i.e. what does the job do, what tasks does it have, what goals does it have to achieve or who does it help to achieve them? Where in the organisational structure is this position located? Maybe it is enough to move it upwards, in order to increase decision-making capabilities, or downwards in the case of too much swagger.

2. the size of the job, how much time is needed to perform the tasks? Part-time might be an option if the activities have to be done every day but only need a few hours. Employment based on a contract of mandate, when the task is limited in time. Outsourcing, i.e. contracting an external company to do a specific job, is a good solution. It is popular for single workers to take on overtime in order to do additional work but increase their earnings, or to assign additional but related to current tasks to people employed in other positions.

3. the cost of existence of the position, including the paycheck, but also the cost of training, benefits, tools. What are the financial expectations of candidates for such positions it the labour market? Are there many? Maybe alternative ways will be more effective such as promoting an employee from within or reorganising the staff? It is also important in this step to establish the economic value of a successful job from the company's point of view. Here both the losses resulting from inadequate staffing and the benefits of employing an outstanding individual are taken into account.

The company's personnel strategy. It is different when the company is oriented towards: development, stabilisation or defence. As part of development the company will bring in specialists from outside, but will also invest in existing employees. There will be a visible focus on expansion and growth, achieving a competitive advantage. In the case of stabilisation, it is the defence of the current staff. Utilising internal resources to the maximum. In contrast, a defensive strategy aims to reduce rather than increase employment. Unless this is done for economic purposes, such as exchange for cheaper or less qualified employees.

III. JOB DESCRIPTION

The job description should be drawn up prior to the recruitment process and meet a number of criteria. The creation of job descriptions should have a clearly defined and widely publicised purpose within the organisation! In addition, it should take into account not only their use in the implementation of currently implemented management solutions, but should also take into account the planned solution[Rostkowski].Many companies use so-called ready-made job descriptions in their company, which are reproduced from year to year, from person to person. It doesn't matter whether we call it a job description or a position card nothing changes in them. And it's hard to disagree with the fact that it saves time and effort, but are they up-to-date job descriptions? If it's outdated, it can't be fully useful for the recruitment process. It is advisable to update it. However, if we are going to create such a document, which, by the way, every employee should have. Let's take care of its individual character. Do not use very general and sometimes abstract wording. This document must be fully comprehensible to the recipient, who will be held accountable for these tasks. Remember that it is a source of information to which we can always refer in case of any doubts. Among the methods used to describe a position, the most commonly used are various questionnaires.

Dividing such a questionnaire into different areas such as place in the organisational structure, tasks, responsibilities, partners, working conditions, and then detailing them gives a very clear picture of the position we are recruiting for.

On the basis of the job description, a profile of the requirements for the ideal candidate is created. What is the profile of the ideal candidate? Competence profile (model, cluster) is a set of the most essential competences possessed by an employee or required at a particular position (along with a specified level of fulfillment [Rostkowski]. Each of the features is given an appropriate weight in the adopted scale. Establishing competence profiles is a prelude to building a coherent system of competence management [Lendzion, Stankiewicz-Mróz].

Table.1

Requirements profile

Requirements profile							
Job title:							
Organisational cell:							
Importance of the characteristic							
Defining characteristic:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Education							
Knowledge of foreign languages							
Computer skills							
Ability to organise work							
Ability to work in a group							
Decision-making							
Risk taking							
Determination							
Being matter-of-fact							

Meticulousness								
Systematic								
Communication skills								
Conflict resolution skills								
Learning to learn								
Analytical skills								
Resistance to stress								
Openness to contacts								
Creativity								

Source: W. Golnau, *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi*, CeDuWu, Warszawa 2007, s.128.

On the basis of this profile, a necessary but also desirable level of the candidate's qualities can be established. This minimum level ensures the proper performance of the job, while the desirable level ensures the best performance of the job. From a practical point of view, we often accept a candidate who is less than optimal in several qualities. When selecting the qualities, care must be taken to reject any form of discrimination because our country has ratified, among other things, Convention 111 of the International Labour Organisation and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. People from the human resources department should be involved in creating the requirements profile, but also those who work with the position to which the recruitment relates. This requires from them a lot of knowledge and self-awareness, but also objectivity. It is undesirable to over- or underestimate the required qualities. Overstated criteria lead either to a lack of interest in the job offer or to an exorbitant salary, and consequently to boredom of the employee in the case of lack of self-fulfilment. Undercutting, on the other hand, leads to hiring clumsy,

inefficient, irresponsible people who are simply not up to the job. This poses a threat not only to the company but also to the person himself/herself, whose mental strain and stress can adversely affect his/her health. The candidate profile is also a set of psychological characteristics, individual talents, but also requirements concerning education, knowledge, professional and additional skills or work experience. The definition of the desired education should be specified in three aspects, namely the level, type and direction of education. The level of knowledge and skills should contain information on whether a given qualification is necessary from the very beginning, or whether it is possible to receive additional training in a given matter if its level is insufficient, for example knowledge of a foreign language.
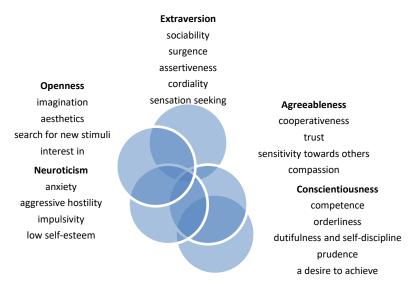
Extraversion
sociability
surgence
assertiveness
cordiality
sensation seeking

Openness
imagination
aesthetics
search for new stimuli
interest in

Agreeableness
cooperativeness
trust
sensitivity towards others
compassion

Neuroticism
anxiety
aggressive hostility
impulsivity
low self-esteem

Conscientiousness
competence
orderliness
dutifulness and self-discipline
prudence
a desire to achieve

Figure 1: The five-factor model of personality.

Source: own elaboration based on: B.Zawadzki, J. Strelau, P. Szczepaniak, M. Śliwińska,*Inwentarz osobowości NEO-FFI Costy i McCrae. Adaptacja polska. Podręcznik*, Warszawa 1998, s. 12.

As in the case of education, work experience is characterized by aspects such as type, content and length of work performed. Usually, however, too much attachment to rigid rules causes that the adaptability of candidates, their ability to learn or the so-called transfer of experience is not taken into account, which on new grounds may bring new and non-schematic solutions on the basis of already acquired knowledge in another field. In defining the desired qualities or psychological characteristics, the most important thing is that they should be concrete and ascertainable as possible. The literature on the subject has formulated the so-called Big Five, i.e. the five-factor model of personality which is presented in the diagram below.

On the basis of this model, another model was created, the so-called five-factor model of psychological professional predispositions IPK. Why? Because despite its numerous applications, it did not win over all theoreticians and practitioners, which was due to a difference of opinion on both the number of dimensions and their content. The new IPK model, which was created, distinguishes five occupational predispositions.
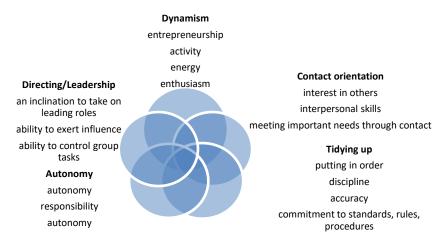

Figure 2: The five-factor model of psychological occupational predispositions.

Source: own elaboration based on: M. Suchar, *Rekrutacja i selekcja personelu*, C.H.Beck 2008, s. 25.

The model presented has gained recognition for its simplicity, clarity and link to experience. The model facilitates rapid conclusions about a person's suitability for a job. The use of the same dimensions to describe the characteristics of candidates as well as the characteristics of a job significantly reduces preparation time. The bipolar nature of these dimensions (e.g. independence: working alone or in a team) allows for matching job characteristics to a candidate's predispositions.

It is very important not to compare candidates when recruiting. The best of them does not have to correspond to the position we are recruiting for. That is why it is so important to create a profile of the position/candidate in order to make the right choice based on it.

IV. CREATIVE METHODS OF ACQUIRING EMPLOYEES

Employers are reaching for more and more ambitious methods of acquiring employees. Modern recruitment channels include not only social media or creative billboards, but increasingly games and even business astrology. Candidates willingly share their impressions after the interview on opinion portals [serwisy.gazetaprawna.pl].

Advertising agency Saatchi&Saatchi, while looking for employees for its IT department, decided to make a selection based on their performance in Diablo III. This method was to verify teamwork and creativity. A real gamer's dream! Through the game, My Marriot Hotel, the company Mariott International also recruited. Only after reaching a sufficiently high level in managing a virtual hotel and restaurant, candidates could take part in the final stage of recruitment. Siemens, on the other hand, recruited through the Plantville game, in which one first had to become a factory manager.

HCL Technologies decided to recruit via a Tweeter. For several weeks, recruitment tasks were published under the tag #CoolestInterviewEver. The best five participants were interviewed, also in Tweeter. Recruitment was promoted by, among others, videos posted on the Internet. In addition to the measurable effect of obtaining a new, talented employee, the number of followers of the company's profile increased by over 20%, which translated into 88 thousand new users.Advertising agency Jung von Matt used "Trojan photographers" to sift out the best art directors from competing ad agencies. The photographers provided the agencies with their portfolios with a discreetly hidden recruitment message. The campaign hit the target perfectly, reaching the desired target group, while also achieving the employer branding objective.

The Volvo Poland plant in Wrocław, wanting to recruit a large number of employees in a short time, decided not to wait until they applied themselves. Special buses went to the field, and the travelling specialists provided interested people with information on the proposed employment. The action was proudly called "Direction Volvo - job stop".

One of the leading producers of furniture stated that the ability to assemble furniture on their own is an important criterion which should be met by a candidate for a new employee. Therefore a leaflet with recruitment instructions was attached to the furniture.

Jung von Matt agency is a leader in creative recruitment. While looking for a new art director they used an unusual method. On the Lorem Ipsum website (lipsum.com) used to create sample blocks of text - used e.g. by web and poster designers, etc., they connected an advertisement informing about an open position. A message was displayed to each user who used the generator on the site. Thanks to this procedure, 200 thousand people reached the announcement.

The Warsaw branch of German agency Jung von Matt also used a creative recruitment method when looking for copywriters. Brief magazine published a crossword puzzle with a QR code as the solution. Scanning it and going to the right website allowed to get to the next stage of recruitment. The campaign hit the target perfectly. In addition, it was also a great advertisement, because the agency's actions made headlines in the media.

Luxsoft Poland bet on the confectionary argument. In Krakow's skyscrapers and offices free doughnuts with a letter containing information about the IT specialists they were looking for were handed out. Even if the sweets did not fall into the hands of the ideal candidate, for recommending the right person you could get a financial benefit, or just eat a free doughnut.

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