

ACTUAL QUESTIONS OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

In many developed countries, demographic and economic conditions have created a situation where traditional human resource management approaches do not allow overcoming the problem of attracting and retaining highly qualified personnel. The new concepts proposed by scientists such as "employer brand", "job crafting intervention" allow solving the tasks facing HR managers. The "employer brand" concept, its internal and external advantages, factors of success and return on investment were studied. It is noted that the company's activities to create its own employer brand involves the joint work of specialists in marketing and management, which ultimately represents a set of functional, economic, psychological and symbolic benefits for employees of the company. The analysis of the employer brand of a number of companies in Primorsky Territory was carried out; the peculiarities of the employer brand formation of these companies were revealed. An algorithm for optimizing the spontaneously created employer brand is proposed, what makes it possible to improve personnel processes. An integral part of the employer brand is the loyalty of the personnel, the formation of which is possible by using the "job crafting intervention" concept. This concept can be defined as the assistance of an HR manager in rethinking employee's tasks, attitudes and perception of one's own work by informing employees about organizational goals, encouraging employees to "rethink their work", and applying corrective measures. A relationship between the employer brand and "job crafting intervention" is considered, recommendations are given for improving the brand and its constituent elements, which include, in particular, "rethinking the work process". Recommendations are given on the implementation of the strategy of "facilitating the rethinking of work": immersing employees in the company's strategy, creating individual development plans, supporting initiatives from personnel, creating a positive atmosphere and organizational culture. Using by the company management of innovative personnel concepts and approaches to human resources management allows taking the leading positions in the labor market and fight for talents.

Keywords: human resources management, personnel recruitment, employee retention, employer brand, employer brand payback, internal and external advantages of the employer brand, job crafting, employee involvement, loyalty, exercise job crafting, job crafting intervention.

INTRODUCTION

In modern economic conditions there is an increasing need of modern companies in highly qualified personnel. But, the higher the qualification of an employee, the more carefully he/she chooses the company where he/she will work. In many countries the issue of the need to attract the best specialists and retain the already existing talents has also moved to a practical level. Constant changes in the external environment, the emergence of new technologies, and organizational innovations require a manager to use an innovative approach to human resources management [Savchenko, 2008, p.96]. More and more

companies use a variety of tools to form and promote a company's image in the labor market. The growing competition for clients every year forces employers to spend more and more time on personnel work: to improve the skills of employees, their loyalty to the company, to seek new approaches for attracting new professionals related to the active use of events such as job fairs, presentations of companies, and also seminars. Such activities are beneficial for the company both financially, and in terms of improving its image as an employer. Companies that focus on long-term strategies and build relationships with potential employees form a competitive image of the company on the market. It is well-known that the personnel of a company are the main source of profit and the main competitive resource. The company's internal image depends directly on the perception and attitude of its employees to it, what makes up the company's internal environment. Workers belonging to the "generation Y" strive for self-expression, self-identification and are the most dependent generation on the image and brand, and this is not an exception in the process of choice of their workplace.

METHODOLOGY

In the literature, the concepts of "image", "reputation" and "brand" are mostly considered synonymous, but they should be distinguished in the context of applying these concepts to a company. If an "image" and a "reputation" are a mediated out image and an opinion of the audience about the company, then the "brand" is a whole complex of information intended for both external and internal audiences. The establishing of the brand as one of the marketing concepts began in the 40s of the XX century. The goal of forming its own image, basically, was to increase the flow of candidates. For the first time, the "employer brand" concept was proposed by S. Barrow and T. Ambler in 1996 and was defined by its authors as a set of functional, psychological and economic advantages provided by an employer and identified with it [Ambler T., Barrow S., 1996]. Researchers define the employer brand as:

- A set of basic benefits for employees (including potential), which they identify with the company as an employer: economic (compensation and benefits), functional (for example, learning new skills), psychological (for example, sense of identity) benefits [Mosley, R., 2009, p.4];
- A targeted long-term strategy for managing the awareness and involvement of employees, potential employees and stakeholders with respect to a particular company (Sullivan, J., 2004);
- The process of formation of an original and unique personality of the employer [Backhaus, K., Tikoo, S., 2004];
- An agreement according to which a proposal of the employer (manifested in the mission, values, confidence building, delegation of authority) and a counteroffer from the employees (in the form of a high level of involvement) are consistent [Martin, G. 2008, p.78].

Categorical analysis has revealed the general component of the employer brand: a certain set of advantages that a particular employer possesses allowing it to attract and retain highly qualified employees. At present, cultivating an employer brand by a company has become a way to attract and retain the most desirable employees: those who will be able to guarantee the competitiveness of the company [Moroko, L. 2008, p.160].

Over the course of two decades, various aspects of recruiting and retaining personnel in the formation of an employer brand have been studied by foreign scientists. The employer brands in a particular company determines such factors as: attractiveness of the industry, the reputation of the company, the quality of goods and services, location, working conditions, remuneration, economic conditions, work / life balance and social responsibility [Menor, J. 2010]. S. Barrow and T. Ambler examined the experience of 27 companies from England and came to the conclusion that the main role of the employer brand is to ensure a coordinated structure. To do this, it is necessary to clearly identify the priorities understandable for

employees, to stimulate labor productivity, to improve the selection, retention, loyalty and involvement of personnel [Ambler T., Barrow S., 1996].

An employer brand includes:

- Internal is directed to working employees and is realized through the program of development and formation of a certain corporate culture;
- External is aimed at potential candidates and the external market, is realized through the effective use of modern communication channels, cooperation with leading media, etc. [Kucherov D.G., Zavyalova E.K., 2012, Kucherov D.G., 2009].

Considering the examples of different companies, you can determine that a brand is divided into spontaneous and intended, where the intended one is the result of the work of specialists in the field of marketing, personnel managers and top managers, and the spontaneous one is formed unconsciously, only with the help of people's opinions [Rezanovich A.E., 2014]. For example, former employees are the direct source of information about the company, sometimes even confidential. Customers, consumers, suppliers - they are all part of the branding.

K. Beckhaus and S. Tikoo suggest that the formation of an employer brand is a three-step process [Backhaus, K., Tikoo, S. 2004. p.502-503]:

- 1) Creation of an employer brand representing a specific Employer's Value Proposition;
- 2) External marketing for the employer brand: the company sends a message to the labor market for applicants, recruitment agencies and other target groups;
- 3) Internal marketing which goal is to develop human resources that will adhere to values and pursue the goals set by the company.

Many companies have already developed and use the Value proposition for employees. The structure of the Value proposition consists of 6 main blocks containing information about the company, people, work, remuneration, opportunities and working conditions. Working with each of the blocks is the basis for further communication and promotion of the company's brand as an employer. Each block of the Value proposition is divided into attracting and retaining attributes. Attracting attributes include the company's reputation, scope of tasks and industry. The attributes of retention include career, internal environment and recognition. Complex use of attributes leads to an increase in the market for potential candidates, and an increase in the loyalty of both existing employees and candidates [12].

Adaptation of recently hired employees is one of the aspects of the employer brand system. The style of the company when helping the company to reduce the adaptation period has a direct impact on the formation of the positive company's image by an employee. Using the New Employee Book during the adaptation period helps to systematize a large amount of information and helps the newly adopted employee to learn more at the workplace. Such handbook consists of administrative and reference information, data on internal infrastructure, brief information about the company, its achievements, the values of philosophy and mission. The use of the mentoring system in the process of adaptation is an indubitable plus for both a new employee and the company. The methods of teaching the mentor's knowledge reflect the system of relationships in the company. The way in which the new employee will have been presented with the necessary information about his/her duties, combined with the company's corporate values, will influence the external and internal employer brand.

Development and training of personnel included in the brand management system of the employer improves employee productivity, affects the motivational aspect and strengthens loyalty. A competently built system of training and the opportunity to build a career in the company have a positive impact on the image of the company in the market. On the contrary, lack of career prospects and training negatively affects both working staff and potential candidates.

According to the authors, for most companies in Russia the following stages in the formation of the employer brand will be characteristic:

- 1) Assessment of spontaneously formed brand of the employer;
- 2) Identification of problem areas;
- 3) Using best practices of personnel management in the company (benchmarking);
- 4) Elaboration of the employer brand development strategy.

A significant role in the process of creating the employer brand is played by the HR department. B. Minchington notes that 37% of respondents (more than 19,000 companies) assign responsibility for the formation of the employer brand to their HR management department [Minchington, B. 2015]. Developed and implemented strategies for the development of the company's personnel are basic for the formation of a positive employer brand [Corte V.D., Mangia G., et al., 2011]. Properly designed and implemented employer brand programs bring advantages in the management of human resources. Thus, the external advantages of a positively formed employer brand are represented by: the maximum suitability of job candidates, simplified and accelerated access to job seekers, what entails a reduction in the cost of recruiting staff; attracting and retaining talented employees. Internal advantages are: higher level of loyalty and involvement of employees, an increase in retention of talented workers, good relations with current and former employees, increasing the level of trust in the company. The external and internal advantages of a well-formed brand allow talking about the return on investment costs.

Investments are made by companies not only in the development of personnel, but also in its release. One of the most expensive, but effective from the point of view of adherence to the brand, is the procedure for the release of personnel (outplacement) which includes a series of activities aimed at helping employees to adapt to the labor market, in choosing a new workplace, in consulting on job search, as well as the professional competencies of employees [Melnikov V.V., 2012]. Abandoning the release procedure increases the risk of spreading negative information about the company. In addition, the dismissal of employees of the category holding significant positions, without preliminary talking, can rarely lead to the disclosure of confidential information to competitors. To implement the release procedure in the form of outplacement, they resort to services of consulting companies for hiring an external outplacement consultant. The decision on how the outplacement will be conducted in the company is made depending on the availability of necessary resources, such as cash, and competent personnel managers.

In the realities of today's labor market, most companies realize that it is necessary to work on the attractiveness of the company's brand in the capacity of an employer in order to attract the best personnel and increase the interest, involvement and loyalty of employees [Masilova, M.G. 2016, Yakimova Z.V., 2011]. Many companies have switched to a personnel strategy within the framework of which opportunities are being realized to disclose the potential of each employee in order to form the prospects for their development and the company as a whole, as well as to increase the level of staff involvement, greater focus on results, and to form the employee's desire to do more than it is required from him/her. Associated with the employer brand is the notion of "commitment", namely, the identification of an employee with the company-employer manifested through a psychological state in which the

manifestation of creativity and initiative during the performance of work duties occurs without management instructions, at will. Commitment to the company can be

- Emotional, when the ideology and values of the company are perceived by the employee as their own;
- Behavioral, where the main role is played by the personal strategic plans of a particular employee;
- Normative, when a person is associated with the company of moral and ethical beliefs.

The most preferable adherence is emotional, but at the same time the normative one is easily achieved, when the employee's efficiency is lower throughout the whole period of work in the company. Summarizing the essence of the notions of "commitment" and "involvement", employees develop a phenomenon called "job crafting" characterized by an inspired approach to work, with increased internal motivation. "Job crafting" can be confidently called an innovative approach to human resource management. For the first time the concept of "job crafting" was proposed in 2001 by American psychologists J. Dutton and A. Wrzesniewski [Wrzesniewski A., J.E. Dutton, 2001]. In their view, "job crafting" is a process through which employees actively revise and change their work to make it more meaningful for themselves. "Job crafting" includes effective performance of functional duties in a non-traditional, non-regulated way, creating a positive sense in the work, forming positive emotions and high quality professional relationships in the company [Cameron K.S, Dutton J.E., 2003]. M. Tims and A. Bakker define "job crafting" as self-initiated and self-implemented changes that allow balancing the expectations of employees with the employer's proposal and their personal needs, and abilities [Tims M., Bakker A.B., 2013]. The research of scientists was rest upon the study of the attitude of employees to their work, the role of personnel in the work activity of the company and the impact of their work on the outcomes of the company as a whole. It was concluded that employees who were aware of the importance of their work and could determine their contribution to the results of the company were absolutely loyal to their company and performed their professional activities much more effectively than those who considered their work boring and unimportant [24-27]. Those employees who independently expanded their functional duties and creatively approached their tasks had a variety of professional experience and were experts in professional matters [Wrzesniewski A. et al., 2013, p.285]. It is important to note that the creation of jobs is not due to redesigning the work as a whole, but to changing certain aspects of the work within the boundaries of specific tasks. For example, "job crafting" can lead to greater autonomy in the work with which an employee will feel a significant responsibility for his/her work, and, as a result, will be motivated to do more to fulfill the task. The "job crafting" approach can be initiated both individually and collectively. There are three different ways that it is possible to use within the framework of "job crafting" [Wrzesniewski A. et al., 2013]:

- 1) Rethinking of tasks involves changing the boundaries of the job by performing more or less of them, expanding or decreasing their volume and changing the way these tasks are performed. It is implemented by adding the most significant tasks for the performance of work, redesigning the undesirable, using different methods and technologies to perform tasks in accordance with the strengths of the employee;
- 2) Rethinking of relations involves a revision of social relations that exist in the workplace, by changing the level or nature of interactions with colleagues. It is necessary to review working relations of the employee giving each communication the meaning and purpose of interaction. Changing the meaning of social relations implies their rebuilding in a positive way, interacting with those who can provide new information, experience and assistance in achieving personal professional goals;
- 3) A reinterpretation of perception involves a change in the perception of one's work. This method involves changes in the personality, making decisions by the employee independently. Increasing the employee's involvement in the work process will be the result of increased responsibility for decisions

made by him/her. It is necessary to create an atmosphere where an employee will be able to reconsider his/her attitude to work, compare his/her personal values with short-term working goals, personal desired results with working results, thereby forming the significance of the work in his/her perception.

Having carried out the research of "job crafting" among sellers, P. Lynes found that 74% of respondents implemented different ways for "rethinking work": to develop personal skills, to expand the range of tasks, and to develop productive relations with colleagues. [Lyons P. 2008]

Investigating the phenomenon of "rethinking work" for several years, scientists tried to use its components in the management of human resources. In 2008, J. Berg, J. Dutton, A. Wrzesniewski, and A. Bakker proposed the concept of "job crafting exercise" (JCE) [Berg, J.M., Dutton, J.E., Wrzesniewski, A., & Bakker.2008]. At the University of Michigan, master classes, workshops on learning the skills of "rethinking work" (positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/cpo-tools/job-crafting-exercise/) programs have been developed, thus a whole direction on "learning to rethink work" was formed. The "Job crafting exercise" manuals have been developed that allow one to reassess oneself and rethink one's work. One of the programs "Job crafting exercise" includes the following stages:

- Representation of the desired labor organization;
- Definition of realistic goals for its implementation (short-term perspective);
- Description of the way to achieve the goal;
- Proposal of positive steps to implement the "rethinking of work".

In 2010 M. French has proposed the concept of "job crafting intervention" (JCI) [French M.2010]. JCI implies the provision of a full range of technical conditions and practical recommendations to the staff allowing an employee to perform work in accordance with the expected results. This concept can be seen as the promotion of job crafting on the part of the HR manager which oversees and directs the employee using any method of "job crafting" by the employee himself/herself. Implementation of the JCI concept includes:

- Informing employees about performance indicators and organizational goals;
- Encouraging employees to review their current functionality using strong qualities;
- The maximum provision of independence in "job crafting" provided that the employee understands the indicated development guidelines of the company;
- Tracking performance indicators of employees, in order to identify ineffective "job crafting";
- The use of corrective measures if necessary [Wingerden J. et al., 2017, p.168].

In the study conducted by J. Berg, A. Wrzesniewski and J. Dutton, it was revealed that "job crafting" includes an adaptive action and allows learning how to deal an employee with changes, and also stimulates creativity and allows for reframing [Berg J.M., Wrzesniewski A., Dutton J.E., 2010].

Study of «job crafting» using the job crafting scale procedure (JCS) is carried out not only in the US and Europe, but also in China, South Africa, and Japan [Eguchi H. et al., 2016, Tims M. et al., 2012]. In Russia, the study of "job crafting" takes place as part of a study of loyalty and involvement of staff. Thus, Manichev S.A. and Manicheva L.G. have developed structural models of "absorption", "energy", "commitment", as well as a generalized structural model of involvement, combining self-efficacy,

optimism with regular and positive feedback on the results achieved [Manicheva L.G., Manichev S.A. 2015, Manichev S.A. 2015].

RESULTS AND THEIR DISCUSSION

Employer brand research is carried out by such companies as "Employer Brand International" (EBI) and "Head Hunter" [16, 17]. EBI conducts research on employer brands, provides consulting and educational services in the field of employer brands. Since 2016 the company has been holding the World Brand Employers Day. Russia annually publishes the "Rating of Russian employers" formed using a unique methodology according to which the evaluation of each company is carried out from three sides: an external evaluation of job seekers; evaluation of the effectiveness of the HR department; and internal evaluation [18]. Participation in such competitions and such evaluation is accepted only by large companies. The authors conducted a survey of the existing employer brand for an internal customer of a number of companies in the Primorsky Territory of Russia. The questionnaire consisted of questions concerning most of the main aspects of the employer brand: knowledge of the company's values, mission and philosophy, wages and salaries payment transparency, communication with management, and prospects for working in the company. Common problem areas were identified in the employer branding system. The majority of company employees have a rough idea of the values and mission of the company. Values of a company are the basis of operational planning and an essential tool in the implementation of its mission. Since there are no registered values in the company, employees have a problem with organizational identification, and as a consequence, it is problematic for a company to position itself as an employer, without having a "foundation" in the form of corporate beliefs shared by all employees. Without the formation of values, it is impossible to create and maintain a corporate culture that is an element of a strong brand. Not all employees can openly talk about their ideas to management, the majority denies the transparency of payment of wages, which is a signal of the lack of established communications and understanding of what tasks must be done to improve their work, and as a result, the company's work.

In modern conditions, image is an integral part of everything that people interact with: the market, education, work, medicine, etc. With the help of image the trust of potential consumers is formed, that is, employees, customers and investors. Positive image of a company has a beneficial effect on the company's position in the market, the attitude of employees and potential candidates to it, and also an opportunity to attract both experienced specialists and prospective graduates of higher educational institutions to vacancies, as well as to facilitate faster adaptation of new employees and the competent release of those who leave the company.

Within the framework of the author's research on topical human resources management issues, the level of staff involvement and "job crafting" was studied using the Utrecht UWES Involvement Scale which includes an assessment of the vigor: how high is the level of readiness of an employee to overcome difficulties in working and solving difficult problems. The second group of questions characterizes dedication, commitment to their work duties, shows how significant is the work for an employee and whether the employee feels a sense of pride to the work. The last group of questions assesses the absorption in activity, the lack of desire to distract from work or to stop it. The data for all groups were calculated by means of an average score for each scale.

The "Job crafting" scale was used by the authors to identify readiness for "rethinking work" among employees. The questions from the scale were aimed at revealing the behavior caused on its own initiative to reconcile the working environment and the employer's expectations with opportunities and preferences

to achieve the set goals. This behavior is directly related to the involvement of staff in the work process. The results of the survey conducted in five companies of the Primorsky Territory are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Results of the survey according to the methodology "Utrecht Work Involvement Scale" (UWES)

Involvement scales	Average in the company					Possible maximum	Standard Deviations	Actual minimum deviation	Actual maximum deviation
	1	2	3	4	5				
Vigor	5.07	5.12	4.36	5.01	4.25	6	0.827	0.88	1.75
Commitment	3.7	4.93	4.16	4.24	3.41	6	0,817	1.17	2.59
Absorption	4.84	4.25	4.44	4.47	4.17	6	0.845	1.16	1.83

As we see from the table, the vigor has the highest rate. This evidences that employees of companies have the potential to carry out more work tasks and there is readiness for greater workload. Speaking of the lowest indicator, this is commitment: employees do not hold onto their seats and can easily leave the company, agreeing to another job offer, with the exception of the company # 2. Employees have no psychological adherence to their work and are mediocre of their functional duties.

The data of the "job crafting" survey of employees from five companies of Primorsky Territory show changes made on a periodic basis by employees in their structural resources, reducing tension, rethinking relationships and rethinking work tasks (Table 2).

Table 2 - Survey results on the "job crafting" scale

Scale of change	Average in the company					Possible maximum	Standard Deviations	Actual minimum deviation	Actual maximum deviation
	1	2	3	4	5				
Increase in structural resources	4.4	4.16	4.24	3.2	4.4	5	0.79	0.6	1.8
Reduction of stress	3.2	2.8	2.54	1.4	2.4	5	0.78	1.8	3.6
Improvement of social relations	3.8	3.33	2.8	3.2	3	5	0.82	1.2	2.2
Complicating work tasks	4	3.47	3.5	2.4	3.2	5	0.76	1	2.6

The results presented in the table indicate that the employees from the companies of the Primorsky Territory of Russia are trying most of all to make changes in the increase of structural resources. This indicator includes self-learning in the workplace, the use of one's potential in full force, solving work issues in an independent manner. The largest deviation is observed in the "stress reduction" scale. This indicator includes such changes: concern for making one's work less stressful and emotional; search for feedback on the results of work from a manager and colleagues; reduce contacts with people who adversely affect the work process; preference on not to make tough choices that emotionally drain the employee. Employees of companies face stress every day and at the moment make the least effort to improve the situation. This carries certain risks, since being exhausted emotionally an employee may leave the company in search of less intense work. The data of the two tables are directly dependent on each other. The stressful atmosphere at work can be one of the reasons for the low "commitment" level to the company. The situation can be changed by using the JCI concept, when the task of a HR manager is to find ways to refer the employee to "job crafting" to relieve tension, which will lead to an increase in the "loyalty" indicator.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of forming or optimizing the employer brand is to reduce the costs of attracting and retaining personnel, increasing the involvement and loyalty of those who already work in the company, and increasing the audience's interest from the external market. A strong employer brand is characterized by a motivation system which differs with transparency for employees, a professional development program, an optional social package, an effective adaptation program, a strong corporate culture supported by most employees. The recognition of the brand attracts new employees; the first acquaintance with the company forms the impression and the desire to become a part of that company.

Using the methods of assessing the involvement of staff and the scale of the job crafting, any HR manager can track in a timely manner those moments that need to be adjusted to create an atmosphere where employees can rethink their own attitude, both to functional duties and to the company as a whole. Implementing the concept of "job crafting intervention" will allow HR managers to direct employees in a right way. Companies wishing to implement the "job crafting intervention" strategy to increase the efficiency of their employees should focus on the autonomy of personnel, creation of individual development plans, absorption of the company's strategy by employees, support of personnel initiatives, creation of a positive atmosphere and organizational culture, within which framework the concept of "job crafting intervention" will be perceived by the staff as a condition for making changes in the work activity of each employee independently. Topical issues of human resources management are in the area of using modern technologies regarding personnel, providing an innovative approach to the human resources management. The use in personnel processes of HR branding and job-crafting intervention technologies will allow employers not only to successfully develop and make profit, but also to create an environment in the company in which the involved, loyal, highly professional personnel will operate.

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