

THE ROLE OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE PERIOD OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES (ON AN EXAMPLE OF THE INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES OF OMSK AREA)

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Abstract

In the modern world, only changes are stable. That is why one of the key competencies of managers in most companies is "willingness to work in changing conditions." As a rule, all changes are connected with the personnel of the organization. In this regard, there is a great risk of problems arising from employees, primarily due to the fact that they do not accept, and sometimes even sabotage, these changes. HR-services play a very important role in avoiding such problems, as the main agents of change that build communications with personnel.

The authors decided to clear if the leaders of personnel services realize their key role and how do they position themselves in these processes. To this end, in February 2018 a survey was conducted, in which 21 heads of HR services of industrial enterprises of the Omsk region took part, during which reorganizations were carried out during the last two years.

The study was based on the author's classification of the main roles of the HR manager in the period of organizational changes. Heads of personnel services were asked to rank roles, assess the relevance of each of them for their enterprise, share their experience in implementing activities that reflect each of the roles.

The best practices for implementing the HR manager roles during the reorganization period are presented by the authors in the article.

Key words: reorganization, hr-processes, organizational changes, personnel, production

JEL Code: J50, J52, J53

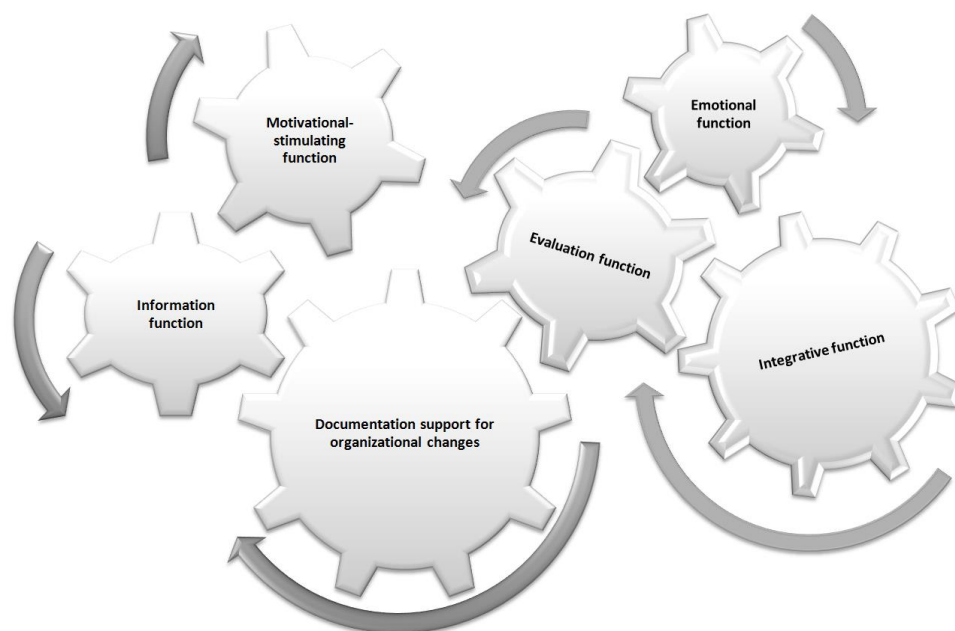
Introduction

Recently, the speed and number of organization changes are constantly increasing, changes in organizational structures and business processes are carried out almost every year, leading to optimizing the number of staff or changing the working conditions.

Anyone who has such experience agrees that this is a complex process - both from an organizational and a psychological point of view. Despite the advantages people often meet changes with caution, they are afraid of uncertainty, they are worried about their future. Such emotional state forms strong internal resistance of the personnel and pretends changes. In such conditions HR-service is important not only to correctly document these changes, but also to become the main "conduit" for this.

The authors identify six main interrelated functions that can be implemented by HR managers in organizational changes (Fig. 1).

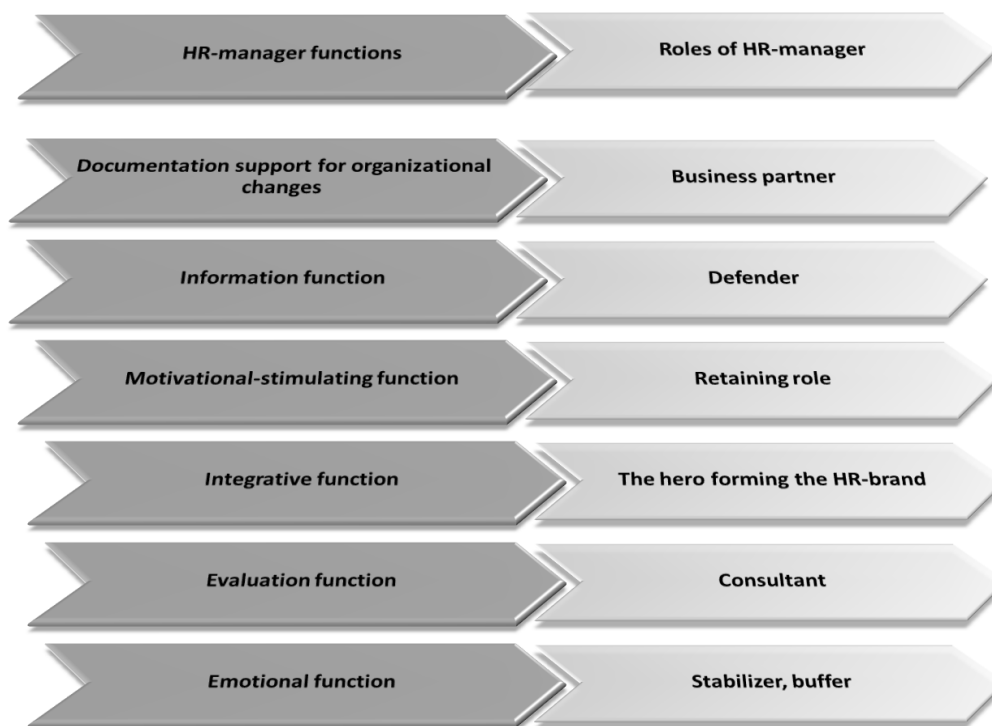
Fig. 1: Functions of HR-services in the period of organizational changes



Source: authors

Realizing these functions, HR managers play some roles for their company, which carries out organizational changes. The main roles that the authors identify are shown in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2: Roles of the HR-manager in implementing organizational changes



Source: authors

The study conducted by the authors in February 2018 was aimed at finding out how the HR services of industrial enterprises in the Omsk region are positioned for organizational changes, how they evaluate their role in this process, what technologies are used to reduce emotional stress, and whether employees are able to adapt to new conditions.

In the survey, the personnel services of industrial enterprises took part, because, according to the authors, in these organizations the most difficult to pass any changes, and HR-services are more often more conservative (Leavitt et al, 1965).

The main results are presented in the article.

1 Documentation support for organizational changes

This function assumes competent and timely registration of labor relations with personnel in accordance to labor legislation. The fact is that the Russian labor legislation is not procedural, but principled. In other words, it contains the principles of how the employment relationship should be formalized. The employer determines the description and implementation of procedures independently, relying, among other things, on judicial practice. On the Internet, there is a large number of commercial and gratuitous electronic resources that can help in preparing the necessary documents and organizing the procedure for signing them with the staff. However, the staff has access to these resources, therefore, HR managers need an

impeccable adherence to the letter of the law. From how the document will be drawn up and the procedure for signing them with the employees is organized, the success of the measures for organizational changes depends to a large extent.

The first thing to pay attention to is that all the HR-services that took part in the survey were unanimous in their position regarding their main role in the reorganization period - competent documentary processing of the processes in accordance with labor legislation in order to minimize the legal risks of the enterprise. Also, all experts noted that it is compliance with all legal aspects that makes it possible to successfully implement the remaining HR functions in the process of organizational changes.

It should be noted that five of the survey participants (20%) noted that this is the only function of the HR service in the case of organizational changes. Other functions, according to these participants, should be implemented by line managers or top managers of the company, who initiate the changes.

According to the authors, this is an indicator of the role that HR services play in the companies. Where they are focused on the implementation of only documentary support for organizational changes, HR-services are simple executors. In turn, at those enterprises where the other functions are implemented to a greater or lesser degree by the personnel, the personnel managers can pretend to be a "business partner", which equally participates in organizational changes (Sinek, S., 2009, Van Rensburg J. M. at al., 2014).

2 Information function

In the period of reorganization, each employee experiences a tension associated with a lack of understanding. People don't know whether they remain with the workplace or not. The presence of different rumors in the organization further strengthens them. Therefore, it is important to inform about planned changes, analyze what information and in what form it is better to provide, as "carelessly" selected phrases can increase resistance to change and the confrontation between the employee and the employer (Holden L. at al, 2000).

As an example, let's compare two phrases that were used in presentations of two different companies.

Presentation №1. "Reduction notices and proposals for transfer will be given in due time according to the law. Please wait for notifications, do not disturb in advance human resources managers. Everyone will be called, acquainted with the proposed conditions. "

Presentation №2. "After the approval of the staff number, personnel arrangements will begin in accordance with the current legislation. The human resources managers will answer all your questions what you have. Please do not worry in advance, all the opportunities will be used to keep existing employees and assist in finding work. "

The first phrase implies a style of interaction - competition, "stops" questions and closes the opportunity for effective communication. The second sets up cooperation, it is invited to join passing of the current situation together.

The results of the survey showed that only one third of the experts paid attention to this function in carrying out organizational changes over the past two years. Thus, most of the industrial enterprises of the Omsk region, who participated in the survey, reorganized in a formalized format.

Assessing the negative consequences of organizational changes, experts noted that one of the main risks is the loss of the best employees in the period of uncertainty, because this category of personnel is more in demand on the labor market. It is interesting that those who attached importance to the information role of HR-service and worked with personnel in the format of cooperation, were able to minimize their losses.

It is worth to mention that those respondents who consider themselves responsible for the information function of line managers and top managers noted more often than others (4 out of 5 and 2 out of 7) that they worked with staff complaints to supervisors bodies (the State Labor Inspectorate).

In other words, HR-managers, who pay attention to the information function, play the role of "defender" of their enterprise from unscheduled inspections by state control bodies and possible fines. In addition, according to the authors, any official complaint of employees casts a shadow on the integrity of the employer. If the audit was carried out and found violations - in the eyes of employees, the enterprise looks negatively as a violator. If the check has passed and has not revealed any violations, there is also a negative color: employees think that the employer "bought" the decision in their favor.

3 Motivational-stimulating function

The implementation of this function can be divided into two areas: the first - work with those who remain after organizational changes, the second - work with those who are fired. Changes and their expectations can be accompanied by a decrease in the productivity of employees, and sometimes the refusal to fulfill current duties from the staff being cut.

Therefore, it is important for the HR department to be motivated to move in the "right direction". In this case, quality communication is important with both managers and employees. For the former, explanations are needed on the management levers in these situations, administrative measures of impact. For the second - information on possible measures and consequences.

According to the results of the research, it can be said that more than 60% of experts direct their efforts to work with those who leave the enterprise, not paying due attention to those who should stay. Assessing who should conduct outreach work with staff, 18 out of 21 heads of HR services noted that this should be the heads of structural units. And about every fifth HR manager said that he conducted explanatory work with line managers. Thus, it can be said that HR manager of industrial enterprises minimized their participation in organizational changes.

At the same time, four HR-managers who told about their work with line managers noted that as a result of organizational changes the company did not lose any valuable employee, from those who should remain in the company. Respondents who describe the additional risks of organizational changes, talked about the loss of demotivated personnel, whose dismissal was not expected.

Thus, implementing the motivational-stimulating function, the HR-manager plays the role of a "restraining element", due to which the fluidity is reduced and the personnel safety of the enterprise is ensured (Gratton L., 2000).

4 Integrative function

This function assumes that the HR service should form a single information field. For example, managers provide one information, the personnel manager gives another information, and the state bodies regulating labor relations between the employee and the employer are the third ones. As a result, the employee may lose confidence in the employer. So in the period of changes it is important to give clear explanations about the procedure and possible options.

In addition, if the organization takes care of its HR brand, then the HR service is better to develop a memo for employees who leave reflecting the answers to three questions:

- How is better to start (where to look for a job)?
- How is better to write a resume?
- What do people to receive unemployment benefits?

The survey showed that only one-third implemented such events, distributing memos for employees who leave. But 13 organizations told about how they distributed summaries of the cut employees to HR managers of other enterprises to facilitate their further employment.

According to the authors, outplacement (employment of the laid-off) is a very important procedure for the formation of a positive image of the employer (Blau, F.D. at al., 2013, Papadakis V. M. at al., 1998). Not all respondents (5 out of 13) who implemented these events noted that the HR-service, among other things, implements the information function. So it can be assumed that either the dismissed employees were not told about the company's assistance in their further employment, or personnel officers do not see the relationship between these areas of work. Consequently, the HR manager plays the role of either a hero or an anti-hero in the formation of his employer's HR brand.

5 Evaluation function

The question of selection criteria is popular among the staff during reduction. That is why it is important the HR department and the manager give feedback about the criterias explaining why this or that choice was made . At the same time, it must be concrete and constructive, taking into account the restrictions established by the Labor Law of the Russian Federation.

As it was mentioned earlier, according to the survey, 85% of HR-managers noted that the main communications with staff about re-training should be carried out by heads of structural divisions and only a fifth of respondents prepared them for this work. In other words, at most industrial enterprises in the Omsk region, the evaluation function of the HR service during the period of organizational changes was practically not realized. Unfortunately, this fact indirectly confirms respondents' answers regarding the importance of the information function (7 of 21).

In the opinion of the authors, the implementation of the evaluation function together with the line manager enables the person to prepare himself and prepare the manager for the implementation of the information function, reasoned communication with employees. The evaluation function allows the HR manager to play the role of a competent consultant, an adviser in making decisions about the employee. Denoting the advantages, development zones and risks for each employee, the HR man plays an important role in supporting the line manager in making socially unpopular decisions (De Waal A. at al, 2016)..

6 Emotional function

The service for work with personnel must direct collective emotions in the right direction, create an atmosphere of friendliness and counteraction to negative attitudes. To do this, it is important to set up managers that the reaction of employees to any negative message is usually negative. Negative emotions should be transformed as soon as possible into at least neutral ones.

The results of the study showed that the majority (19 of 21) of HR managers participating in the survey did not think about the importance of managing the emotional background in the period of changes, and did not consider that this role was important as others.

At the same time, realizing the emotional function, the HR manager plays the role of the stabilizer of the social and psychological climate in the team. According to the authors, one of the main appointments of the HR manager is a buffer between the interests of the employer and the employee. He must be able to realize the goals of business, without prejudice to the rights of workers. You can agree with almost any worker and almost everything. The main thing is to correctly assess his emotional state, to support and lead to a decision that corresponds to the goals of the organization (Bowler W. M. at al., 2010, Carroll A., 1991, Schein E.H., 1992).

Conclusion

Summing up, we can once again emphasize that one of the indispensable conditions for successful reorganization is the availability of a competent manager of the personnel service, working in conjunction with line managers. Implementing all its functions in organizational changes, HR-service plays several key roles in the organization. Timely and correct execution of documents, participation in communication sessions in conjunction with line managers, evaluation activities, emotional support of the team, motivation and stimulation of employees, assistance in finding employment for those who leave can realize different roles: business partner, advocate, consultant and buffer. The main thing is how the HR managers position themselves, and how deeply they plunge into the business processes of the enterprise.

A survey of experts showed that in industrial enterprises the role of HR services in organizational changes is small and, above all, because of their vision of their own functions in these processes.

For the most part, HR managers see their appointment in the proper execution of documents and the timely execution of procedures established by the labor legislation of the

Russian Federation. The fact that there should be communication support for the processes of some thinking, noting the individual functions as implemented in their companies. Fortunately, there are also those who not only note the importance of accompanying functions, but carry out specific measures for their implementation. For example, they send resumes of employees to other enterprises. Some HR managers train line managers to conduct meetings with staff. However, this work is not systematic, which is also reflected in the results of the survey.

Thus, the study confirmed that many human resources management services for industrial enterprises in the Omsk region are at the stage of formation and awareness of their role in organizational changes. The popularization of various methods of personnel management in these issues over time will help to teach human resources services to properly build communication between parts of the organizational mechanism, which in the end multiply the efficiency of its reorganization.

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