

EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE – IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS AND PROPOSALS FOR THEIR ELIMINATION

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Abstract: Employee performance assessment is an important element of human resource management. In a modern business performance assessment is considered as an important starting point for improving its performance. Performance evaluation and management is generally structured with the process of routinely setting goals, communicating and awarding prizes, respectively draw consequences. Managers and the staff also need to understand that there is no perfect rating system. All evaluation systems have their own mistakes, but all of them are an effective tool for correcting performance problems and, ultimately, a tool to increase business productivity and thus competitiveness. The paper presents the results of a survey carried out in select enterprises in the Slovak Republic, focusing on the evaluation of employees' performance; problem identification and pointing to the appropriate tools to remove or, elimination of identified problems.

Keywords: human resource management, work performance, problems of evaluation

1 Introduction

The current economic and social environment is characterized by turbulent changes in all areas of social life and creates completely new conditions for the operation of different types of organizations. As described by other authors, it is mainly about changes in economic relations, political systems, technology development, simulation in production processes (Trebuňa, Popovič & Klos, 2014; Trebuňa et al., 2014), alternation of generations of X and Y staff members (Krahn & Galambos, 2014, Kocian, 2015), and also the rapid development of communication technologies (Prajová et al., 2016). The significance / importance of Corporate Social Responsibility is rising (Vartiak, 2016). There is a need to take into account sustainable development, QMS, EMS (Rusko et al., 2016; Paulová, Kučerová & Mlčka, 2009) including the environmental aspects of entrepreneurship. We believe that there exists contingency perspective on the effect of corporate social responsibility performance on corporate financial performance and it is contextual in respect to three different dimensions of CSR being – Environmental, Social and Governance. We can also assume that if CSR has a positive effect on corporate performance that each dimension of CSR activities might also have a positive impact (Daszynska-Zygadlo, Slonski & Zawadzki, 2016). There is a significant increase in contacts of cultures of different values, which put different demands on people (Durišová & Čambál, 2015). These changes have to be monitored and tailored by companies, but mainly utilized by the opportunities provided by the new global business environment. In order to ensure competitiveness, the quality of human resources, their management and the related monitoring of employee performance are at the forefront of the interest in business entities.

Success of any company depends nowadays on the extent to which it capitalizes on its competitive advantage, and that is when sustainable development comes to the fore. (Kocmanová, Šimanaviciene & Dočekalova, 2015). One of the decisive factors of the company's competitiveness is becoming employees and their potential. This creates a need to detect / measure their contribution to achieving corporate success. Finding the right tools for assessing the employee performance and potential, identifying issues that can affect it, and finding optimal solutions are an important part of Human resource management.

The aim of the paper is to present the results of the VEGA survey with a focus on employee evaluation. We tried to identify issues arising in the evaluation of various categories of

employees and then find the appropriate tools for their removal resp. elimination. To achieve our goal, we used the following research methods: comparative analysis of literary sources, questionnaire survey, and statistical evaluation of results and interpretation of results obtained from surveys in industrial enterprises in Slovakia.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Human resource management and work performance

Human resource management is the core of enterprise management because human resources are for the company the most valuable and often the most expensive resource which decide the company competitiveness. Also human resources represent the largest wealth of enterprise and their management decides whether the business will be successful or not. Human resources are considered the driving motor which set in motion other sources and makes use of them (Koltnerová, Chlpeková, & Samáková, 2013).

The views of the authors (Čambál, Cagaňová & Šujanová, 2012; Gyurák B., Kučerová & Homokyová, 2015; Kachaňáková, 2007), who deal with human resources management and performance are not quite unified and in theoretical works we find several definitions and approaches to understanding basic concepts power and performance.

In economic theory and in practice, work performance is considered as a measure of a person's work activity. Work performance is defined by the authors differently. As a rule, however, they focus either on performance in behavior or performance in the form of results (fulfillment of quantitative indicators) (Posoldová, 2014).

In general, work performance can be understood as an expression of the amount and quality of work that a worker performs under the given working conditions for a given time unit. The ability of an individual to perform a certain (maximum) work performance is called performance. Power is understood to be its actual expression, which is determined, in contrast to performance, by a more permanent set of dispositions and the ability of an employee (Szarková, 2004).

Work performance can be defined as a result, linked to the organization's strategic objectives, customer satisfaction and contributing to economic results. In a modern company, people's management is based on rewarding their benefits and targeted development of potential. The fulfillment of demanding goals is a constant monitoring and evaluation of work results, removal of undesirable deviations, direct remuneration and education of people (Trebuňa, 2011).

People tend to do what their performance is measured and they continue to do what they are rewarded for. Tell people what you want and reward them when they do it and punish when they do not. In this sense, people are not very different from laboratory animals that continue to behave when they receive granules and pay attention to the behaviors they are receiving for electric shocks. In reality, however, organizational performance and remuneration systems usually do not work so straightforward, but they contain multiple goals, and measures that do not always reflect real behavior and incentives that are not always tied to measures or goals. The result is a confusing and counterproductive practice, which can be termed "reward A, although we require B" (Ashkenas, 2010, str. 159).

People in the organization do what is expected of them because they are rewarding if they do well (if they work with the organization to help achieve the goals within the frame of a wider strategy). Sometimes the remuneration is a form of salary increase, credentials by, new more interesting, respectively more

challenging tasks or job promotion. In other cases, it is just a praise or an interesting opportunity. Instead, many organizations do not rely on effective performance under clearly defined success criteria, or their criteria are too narrow and have unexpected consequences for the organization and its key partners (Mouvius & Susskind, 2010, str. 88).

Invaluable performance review can be a great opportunity for managers to learn about new things in an innovation process that could be used for the entire organization (Mouvius & Susskind, 2010, str. 91).

2.2 Assessment and measurement of employee performance

Employee assessment is of great importance for the functioning of businesses or different institutions. In practice, employee appraisal and performance in an enterprise means determining how the employee performs his / her work, tasks and requirements that are related to his / her job content and also his / her work behavior towards other colleagues (Vetráková et al., 2007, s. 51).

Working performance evaluation represents a process in which organization evaluates performance as well as competence and working behavior of employees. If this evaluation is well prepared and conducted its results can mean impact for individual employees, managers and whole organization (Stachová, 2012).

"When you cannot measure it, you cannot even control it." The performance measurement system has a very strong impact on the behavior of people inside and outside of the business. In order to survive and thrive businesses in the information age, they must use management and measurement systems based on their strategy and capabilities. Many businesses formulate strategies for their customer relationships, key competencies, and in-house capabilities, but employees are only motivated by financial indicators, and their performance is also being evaluated in this way (Kaplan & Norton, 2005 str. 29).

The normative part of the organization's assessment asks not only to identify the nature of the issues we want to eliminate but also to specify what steps to do for remedial action - including coaching, clear benchmarks, motivational incentives, individual success factors. They must agree on clear rules. It is important to build a rating to highlight the critical need to improve the business strategy, the steps to be taken to build the organization's ability to respond to change and achieve the expected successes (Mouvius & Susskind, 2010).

In the view of several authors (Woolliscroft et al., 2013; Saniuk et al., 2015), performance indicators should be chosen to be understandable to all groups of employees at all levels of management. It is important to familiarize them with the employees and to analyze whether there are barriers eliminating the increase in employee performance.

An enterprise should define performance standards that are tied to enterprise Key Performance Indicators. This should correspond to the individual goal metrics consistent with business strategy and business goals. Employee Performance Management and Employee Performance Management System can build enterprise culture in a precise and long-term manner. Corporate culture consists of "values", "beliefs" and "standards" effecting thoughts and behavior of people in enterprises. They are key factors used to describe corporate culture. The corporate culture determines how employees describe where they work, how they understand the business, and how they see themselves as a part of the organization. Culture is also a driver of decisions, actions, and ultimately the overall performance of the organization, whether it is private or public sector (Hitka et al., 2015). It depends on employee's involvement into designing of assessment system, domination of feedback type in organization and dominating of stimulation system (Papsiene & Vaitkevicius, 2014).

At present, it is necessary to identify and define the key parameters of Sustainable Business Performance. An open question remains the way of measuring performance, individual indicators that would allow comparisons, or in time, between departments, respectively businesses to each other.

The total potential of employees can be used for benefit of the organization through shared values, by fostering mutual trust and facilitating initiatives. Staff involvement and communication with them enables using their skills to benefit the organization. (ISO 9004.2009)

The organization should motivate people to understand the significance and importance of their responsibilities and activities in relation to the creation and provision of value for the customers and other interested parties. (ISO 9004.2009)

2.3 Current trends in employee performance evaluation

Employee assessment, which in essence represents a qualitative assessment of the performance and personal benefits of employees, can serve as a tool for identifying the level of competence. The extent to which the outcome reveals the level of fulfillment of the individual competencies is determined by setting the criteria of which evaluation system (Vaňová, Gyurák Báběřová, 2011).

The basis for assessing work behavior is often the so-called competence model, based on corporate values and expressing the profile of an ideal employee. Competency model is a complex of measurable personality traits, abilities and working habits that enable the employee to perform at the position.

Employee development within the specific needs and requirements of the business is becoming more and more important. For this reason, the evaluation process concentrates more and more on the potential of employees, the level of their own thinking and thinking. The potential of employees for their strategic value for an enterprise becomes more important than the currently measured performance capability. Therefore, the evaluation is relevant not only for the present (or past) performance of the employee but for his / her development potential.

360-degree rating: The tool itself, promising just a comprehensive evaluation and integration of different viewing angles, is a 360-degree rating. In practice, this gains increasing importance. In it, they express the opinions of superiors, colleagues, co-workers and clients. This exemplar model is promoted in practice according to cultural and organizational assumptions in various variations. Most often, a supervisor's view is completed only with a request from co-workers (180 degrees) or a client opinion selected (270). By marking "360 degrees", it is to be emphasized that self-image in terms of self-evaluation / self-assessment is the basis and assumption of others.

Assessment Center (AC) and Development Center (DC) – Evaluation and Development Programs: AC and DC means in practice diagnostic or evaluation centers, which are required to assess the performance of managers, as well as specialists, rather than normal workers in production. This type of assessment is conducted through in-depth, detailed interviews, psychological testing, and simulations of various work activities or actions. The biggest drawbacks in this type of assessment are mainly financial and time-consuming, and the fact that information about an employee in a so-called fictitious or simulated environment may not be in line with his real work performance at a real workplace (Kachaňáková, 2007).

Managerial competencies are recommended to evaluate in the Development Center or through psychological and personality tests. DC is a moderated meeting, where participants-assessments engage in group and individual assignments and are led by a structured personality interview. In DC, unlike AC, all the competences displayed and all their levels, not just required

for a particular job, are monitored. Feedback evaluators and interpreters should be trained by LL staff and external consultants for staffing and training agencies. Psychological and personality tests should only be evaluated by psychologists. DC is demanding both for the preparation and for the content and time-based implementation, and therefore it is, used mainly by the employees involved in the career planning.

The various tools used to assess the performance and potential of employees are often deployed in companies in parallel. There is no absolute trust in individual human resources management, more efforts are being made for balanced employee observation and a combination of different evaluation tools. This may relativize the subjectivity of the superiors, the personal engagement of colleagues and the laboratory effect assessment processes. The endeavor is to compose the individual view angles into the overall image of the scorer. A reliable statement about the potential and performance capabilities of an employee is required, which implies the basic direction for the next individual development.

3 Methodology

The aim of the submitted contribution is to summarize the acquired knowledge, to identify problems in the field of measurement and evaluation of the employees' performance and to propose suitable starting points on the basis of previous own surveys, as well as the use of secondary research (study of existing available publications in the given field).

Data obtained from questionnaires were processed and evaluated using mathematic and statistics to express frequency and percentage of answers. Analysis and synthesis were used for obtained information and various aspects of research problems solutions discussing, so these methods were used to sort and summarize identified data. Synthesis was used to ensure the logical and idea entity of partial research results devoted by

analysis. Finally, the reached data from organizations were compared.

4 Results

Within the research project "Identification key parameters of sustainable performance of industrial enterprises in terms of multicultural environment", we used a questionnaire survey focused on the issue of enterprise performance. In addition, we conducted secondary research of existing studies available to the area and we used the study of the available literature sources.

We conducted the questionnaire survey amongst industrial enterprises in Slovakia, it was completed by 169 enterprises (5,3 % microenterprises; 12,4 % of small enterprises; 37,3 % of medium-sized enterprises and 45 % of large enterprises).

Based on answers from respondents, 85.1% of the organizations surveyed perform a regular performance evaluation of employees. The group of respondents did not rank the results according to the size of the organization, as the evaluation and measurement of the performance of their employees is not carried out in micro-enterprises and in most small enterprises. Middle and large businesses are evaluating employee performance, and differences have not been found between them. In their responses to the other questions in the questionnaire, the respondents addressed the problems they encountered in the field.

In the questionnaire was surveyed the frequency of measuring and evaluating employee performance. The answers to this question are related to the number of respondents who said they were evaluating the performance of their employees. As respondents had the opportunity to report multiple responses (e.g. irregularly + annual, monthly + yearly), the question was evaluated in absolute terms. As can be seen in FIG. 1, the majority of respondents realize annual, respectively monthly evaluation.

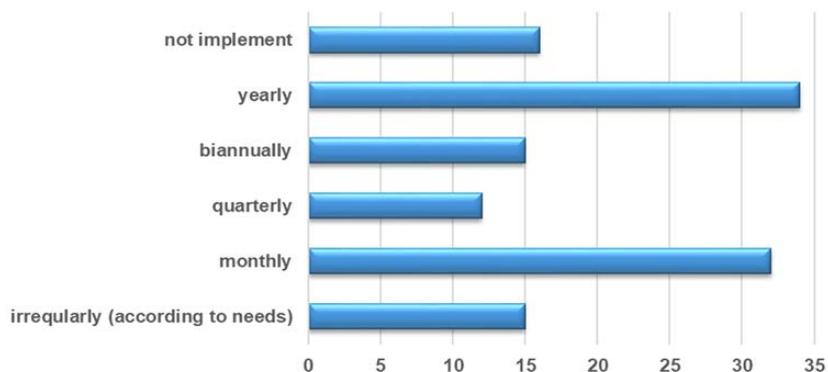


Figure 1. Survey of employee measurement and evaluation frequency.

Source: own processing

Then we focused on finding out what they consider the organization as the biggest problem in the evaluation of employees broken down by category, i. e. production staff (operators, etc.), Technical and administrative staff and managers.

The graphical representation of the survey results is shown in Fig. 2, which suggests that respondents in all three categories consider the evaluator's subjectivity as the biggest problem. In the other criteria, different categories of employees are different.

The production staff is considered a problem of lack of time to conduct interviews and assessment is considered unnecessary formality which does not help. In the case of technical and administrative staff, another criterion was the non-linking of the evaluation results to remuneration and career growth. For managers, the other criteria were setting measurable results and short time for conducting interviews.

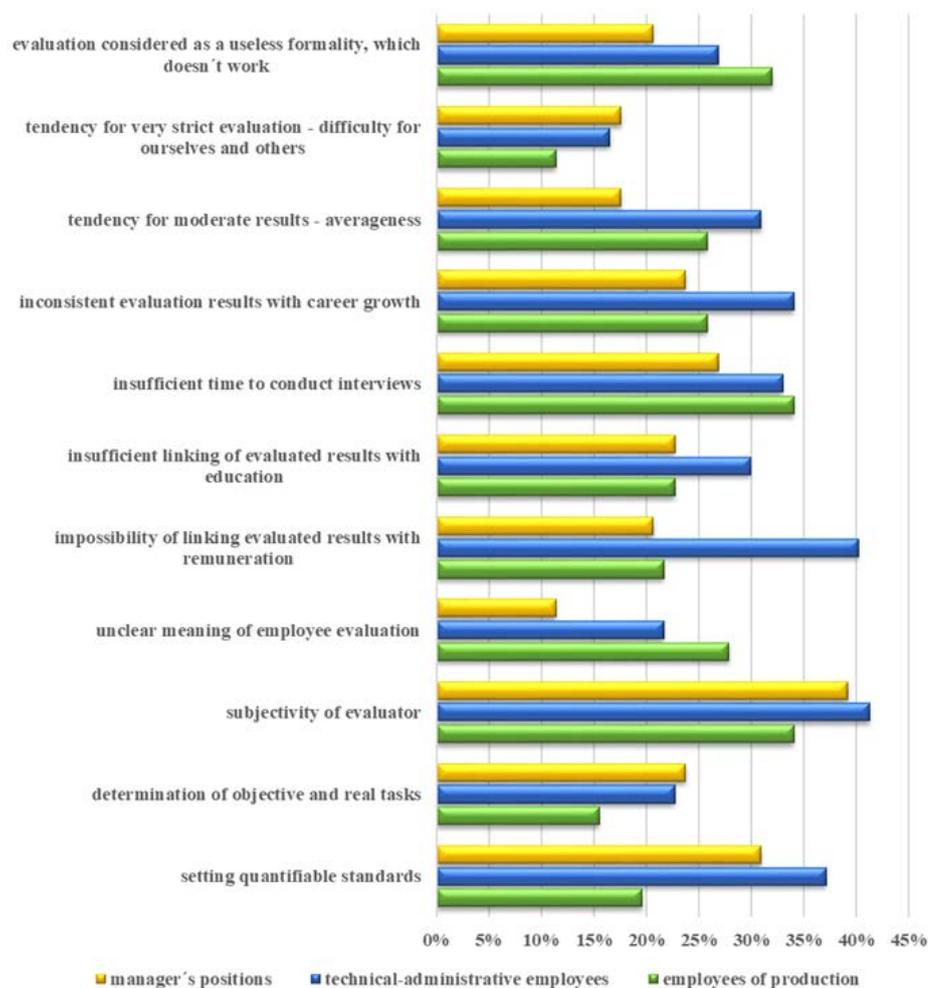


Figure 2. Troubleshooting for staff performance ratings by category
Source: own processing

Respondents were asked to comment on which criteria they did not consider to be a problem. As can be seen from Tab 1, the following considerations are not considered to be the problem: the most responses. The smallest problem is the tendency to a very rigorous assessment – the difficulty of ourselves and others.

Although the respondents are reporting a problem as a problem with the assessment criterion considered unnecessary formality that does not help, in the overall assessment this criterion does not turn out to be problematic.

Tab. 1 Survey of perceptions / not understanding of staff performance appraisal (Source: own processing)

| Number | Characteristic no-problem | Percentage |
|--------|---|------------|
| 1 | setting quantifiable standards | 31,69 |
| 2 | determination of objective and real tasks | 35,05 |
| 3 | subjectivity of evaluator | 28,87 |
| 4 | unclear meaning of employee evaluation | 34,02 |
| 5 | impossibility of linking evaluated results with remuneration | 35,05 |
| 6 | insufficient linking of evaluated results with education | 35,05 |
| 7 | insufficient time to conduct interviews | 27,84 |
| 8 | inconsistent evaluation results with career growth | 24,74 |
| 9 | tendency for moderate results - averageness | 31,96 |
| 10 | tendency for very strict evaluation - difficulty for ourselves and others | 44,33 |
| 11 | evaluation considered as a useless formality, which doesn't work | 41,24 |

5 Discussion and suggestions for solution

Employee performance is the basis for the company's overall performance. If employees do not have feedback as their performance is assessed, as the employer is satisfied with their activities, they are unlikely to change their actions. If the company wants to manage employee performance, they need to know clearly what is expected of them (set goals), create conditions for work, and give feedback to employees, as satisfied with their previous work and see the potential of their further development.

A simpler and more manageable measure is to measure the organization's quantitative goals. The measurement of qualitative indicators is more difficult and more complicated.

Performance indicators should be chosen in such a way that they are understandable to all groups of employees at all levels of management. It is important to familiarize them with the employees and to analyze whether there are barriers eliminating the increase in employee performance. On the basis of the results obtained and the trend of the development of these indicators, the performance of the employee and his potential should be assessed.

In the survey, we outlined the important aspects that we want to focus on in the future and can be addressed by further research.

Based on the results of the survey, which found that the subjectivity of ratings for all categories of staff appears to be the most significant issue. The question remains how to solve this problem? Can we deal with all categories in the same way or do different approaches be chosen? One of the options is the more rigorous preparation and training of the assessors, respectively. Expanding the number of evaluators for non-interested persons (eg personnel, employee representatives, etc.). As a further option, it appears to increase the use of the 360 ° employee rating method.

Another identified shortcoming in the category of technical and administrative staff is that staff evaluation results are not linked to other subsystems, that is to the remuneration system and career growth of employees. In this context, questions about the importance of staff evaluation are taken into consideration - is evaluation worthwhile without further follow-up? What does the career development system of employees depend on?

Survey results also point to the problem of setting measurable criteria for the category of managers and technical and administrative staff. The question is: What indicators do businesses focus on when assessing these groups of employees? Is it sufficient to measure performance to evaluate only financial indicators? The solution can be to use MBO, MBC, KPI, and BSC performance evaluation systems, which are mainly described in the RLZ theory, but their practice has not yet fully implemented.

To shape behavior, it is necessary to introduce an effective evaluation of employees who will not assess their behavior from the past, by denouncing what was wrong (past we will not change), but focusing on the future, learning from the errors and evaluating the potential of the employee and the possibilities of his development, by agreeing, for example, the motivation objectives to be achieved by the employee in the next period, discussing the support he needs from the supervisor.

In the past, staff ratings lacked standardization, leading to a high degree of subjectivism. At present, human resource assessment is becoming a means to help drive the MBO goals. It becomes an integral part of managing people and joins with other levels of HRM. It serves as a basis for the formation of remuneration as a starting point for development as well as a tool for maintaining (securing) the individual effort (motivation) of the employee, or for the inclusion of the employee in the program of career development and succession planning.

6 Conclusion

The Performance Management System ensures not only consistency and goal communication, but also employee performance appraisal, commitment to motivation and development with expected performance, and feedback on the effectiveness of the entire system.

The main goal of Employee Performance Assessment should be to create a comprehensive image of the employee, his strengths and weaknesses, the possibilities for further development as well as the results of his work and his future perspectives in the organization. It should form the basis for the development of an employee's career, conditional on specific activities, especially in the field of education, or to create a forum for discussion about moving to another job position that would correspond more to the employee's duties. In case of a negative evaluation, inform and talk to the employee about the consequences. The outcome of the evaluation should be linked to other motivational tools.

Regular assessment of staff performance and positive approach to management and employees should be part of building and maintaining corporate culture. Corporate culture as a basis for all actions and decisions must be transformed into everyday

business process and operations (Vaňová & Gyurák Báběřová, 2014).

Employee performance increase, will be not succeed if there is wrong corporate culture, in the business, if (Team of authors, 2009):

- we do not have clearly defined corporate objectives and strategy,
- we frequently change corporate strategy and objectives,
- we do not have clearly discussed strategy and objectives of the enterprise also with employees,
- we have implemented multistage and confusing organizational structure,
- we have a tenuous flow of relevant information,
- we have applied only authoritative control that commands and shows only the failures of employees, we have in the enterprise groups and individuals who do not respect generally accepted rules and standards.

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