PROFESSIONAL ADAPTATION OF NEW EMPLOYEES TO THE ORGANIZATION

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Abstract: The article discusses the problem of occupational adaptation, which is a significant motivator for keeping a job. The concern of employers that the subordinates are best suited to the work they perform is important for the efficient and effective operation of the entire organization. When an employee has a sense of adaptation to the tasks and requirements of the work imposed on him, he achieves a positive state of well-being, thus striving to stay in the company for as long as possible. Efforts of the organization to ensure the required quality of work already at the stage of introduction into the organization translate into benefits from the skills and competencies of the new employee. The aim of the article is to present selected issues related to the professional adaptation of newly hired employees in the workplace. In the theoretical part, the essence and scope of professional adaptation of newly hired employees were pointed out and the factors conditioning the achievement of adaptation to the organization were analyzed. The empirical part discusses adaptation tools, which organizations use to provide employees with support in the process of introduction to work. It also examines the level of their effectiveness in adapting to work in selected aspects of the organization's functioning.
Keywords: adaptation tools, new employee, professional adaptation

1. INTRODUCTION

Starting a new job is a stressful experience due to the fact of being in a new environment. A properly implemented process of adaptation of a newly hired person is not without significance both for them and for the company in which they will start a job. Newcomers should adapt to the new role, tasks at the workplace, crew members and management. This is an important stage in their lives, as it is often the beginning of a professional career. Correct implementation of adaptation process determines the effectiveness of subsequent activities in the workplace, and its absence may result in undesirable attitudes of the employee. Therefore, preparing the employee for fulfilling professional duties should be deliberately planned and carried out based on the application of different methods and forms of approach to the adaptation process in the workplace.

The aim of the article is to present selected issues related to the professional adaptation of newly hired employees in the workplace. The empirical part discusses adaptation tools, which organizations use to provide employees with support in the process of introduction to work. It also examines the level of their effectiveness in adapting to work in selected aspects of the organization's functioning. The adopted research tool was a questionnaire. In order to examine the adaptation to work, a group of surveyed people used the My Work Questionnaire, which included questions regarding the course of the adaptation process in their workplace. The analysis of the results was carried out using statistical tests. The results were subjected to the chi-square independence test. On its basis, it was assessed whether the degree of adaptation of people to work depends on the selected factors. The null hypothesis (H0) assumes that there is no statistically significant relationship, while the alternative hypothesis (H1) assumes that such a relationship exists. The level of significance assumed for the tests is $\alpha = 0.05$.

2. THE ESSENCE AND SCOPE OF PROFESSIONAL ADAPTATION

Professional adaptation is the process of adapting a newly hired employee to the new conditions of their work environment. It is a consequence of the stage of obtaining new people to work, who have passed successfully through the selection procedures. The main goal of the adaptation process is to introduce the employee to the organization as soon and as efficiently as possible, mainly by informing of the patterns of behavior required from the employee in the future (Huselid et al., 2009). In order to achieve this effect, the correctly implemented adaptation process should enable the employee to get to know the organization in its various aspects - its objectives, structure, rules, procedures, prevailing habits, motivational system principles. It should also outline the scope of tasks and expectations related to work at a given position, introduce to other employees, with whom the newly hired person will cooperate in the future and familiarize the employee with the methods of work used in the organization to carry out tasks (Watkins, 2016). Occupational adaptation is used interchangeably with the concept of "adjustment to work" understood as similarity or consistency between the characteristics of employees and the organization that operates based on rules and principles for achieving a specific goal (Kristof-Brown, 2005). It can be considered in two essential and complementary dimensions (Boroş, 2008): complementary - which is the compatibility between the employee's capabilities and the requirements set by the organization, and between employee's needs and the organization's resources; supplementary - which is the similarity of values, goals and features valued by the employee and represented by the organization.

The integration of both ways of interpreting the adaptation of an employee to the workplace was proposed by A. L. Kristof. According to the author, both the employee and the organization have specific resources and are able to offer them, as well as the expectations they require. Resources and expectations result from activities characteristic for a given organization and the characteristics of the person, which consists of set values and norms of conduct (Czerw and Czarnota-Bojarska, 2016). Individual types of adaptation cannot be recognized separately. The commonly quoted definition by A.L. Kristof points out that they are interrelated, the adjustment to the organization consists of conformity "between the people and the organization, which occurs when at least one of the parties provide what the other needs, if they share similar basic characteristics, or both" (Kristof, 1996).

Satisfying the employee's needs and compliance of the values accepted by them with the values accepted by the organization leads to their identification with the organization. A high degree of employee's identification with the organization is considered the third adaptation indicator and is usually understood as a bond built on the basis of beliefs and emotions that employees feel towards their organization, or as a process in which employees' and organizations' goals are integrated with each other (Caldwell and Hansen, 2010).

Adaptation is a process characterized by complexity and multidimensionality, the success of which is determined by two parties, both the employee and the organization. In practice, there are several approaches to adaptation activities on the organization's side. Organizations that leave a newly hired employee without support, assuming that they will adapt to the requirements imposed on them in an independent manner, use the type of procedure called spontaneous adaptation. They impose on the employee the obligation to independently acquire knowledge about the course of work in the organization and the customs and behaviors that apply to it. Organizations that manage the adaptation process in a conscious way undertake activities based on the implementation of a targeted (organized) adaptation program. This approach to the process of adaptation involves many advantages: less risk of the employee leaving the organization, a greater sense of security, which leads to increased links with the company and commitment to work, faster implementation of the employee to a new professional role and shorter duration of the adaptation process (Smith et al., 2016).

Preparing a new employee to fulfill his obligations may be carried out by using other methods and forms of approach to the process of professional adaptation in the workplace. This approach can be of an institutional nature or can be individual. Using the institutional approach, the implementation process is top-down and carried out based on known schemes and rules. In the case of an individual approach, the implementation process is characterized by looser rules and a learning plan. According to this perspective, there is a need for a flexible approach to a new employee, taking into account their individual characteristics to which the implementation strategy is adapted. It is worth emphasizing that in both approaches the implementation process should be supported by information on regulations, procedures and standards made available to a newly-hired employee (Ciekanowski, 2012).

In the current competitive world, organizations focused on success should be oriented on the use of methods and tools that allow for quick and skillful use of information helpful in discovering a new career path (Caldwell and Peters, 2018). Striving to achieve this goal, organizations use an innovative approach to projects related to adaptation to work. Innovations in adaptation boil down to introducing the newly employed to the organization in a way that offers non-standard solutions that allow them to get acquainted with the necessary tips to work, with the culture of the organization, the applicable rules and procedures, and above all with the scope of duties. Acquisition of new duties in a friendly atmosphere promotes the motivation to work for a new employee, building strong relationships based on loyalty to the company (Yamkovenko and Hatala, 2015).

An innovative approach during the introduction of an employee to the organization is the use of elements of gamification. During the first days of work, the newly hired employee gets to know a lot of information about the company's operations, and he is

put in a difficult situation of being the main character. The employee uses the collected information to get acquainted with the surroundings, collects points and levels up. Thanks to this method the novice quickly gains the skills necessary to perform everyday duties, solves tasks related to the target work, learns to make decisions and use the acquired knowledge. This element is met with growing interest and approval of the management in contemporary organizations (Kordecka-Myślińska, 2013). In the adaptation process, it is important to receive feedback for a new employee. It allows to consolidate positive behavior and indicates areas for improvement, indicating ways to implement specific tasks and ways to control them (Weinstock, 2015). In this case, it is a conversation aimed at gaining information on the manner of performing duties and functions by the employee and mutual expectations on the employer-employee line. The result of such a conversation may be the elaboration of arrangements in the long run. For the organization, the conversation during the adaptation is one of the means to increase efficiency and effectiveness (Pratiwi et al., 2018). For an employee, it is an opportunity to gain insight into one's own functioning and may relate to (Marciniak and Leśnikowska-Marciniak, 2013):

- matters that cause the employee the greatest difficulties,
- analysis and evaluation of work efficiency,
- ways of behavior,
- special areas of interest in the activities of the organization,
- knowledge about individual elements of the organization and rules of functioning,
- assessment of the process of employee adaptation - its strengths and weaknesses,
- a preliminary assessment of employee development opportunities,
- the degree of integration with the staff team, how the flow of information between them looks like,
- further professional and educational plans of the employee.

As a result of a properly carried out adaptation process, the employee can adapt fully to the new working conditions. This means that he has achieved full effectiveness in the implementation of tasks that are clear to him and in accordance with his competences, greater involvement in fulfilling assigned duties while drawing a sense of satisfaction and professional suitability from his work. Lack of adaptation leads to negative consequences in the form of a lack of both job satisfaction and usefulness in the organization (Bauer, 2010).

3. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Empirical research analyses adaptation tools, which organizations use to provide employees with support in the process of introduction to work. It also examines the level of their effectiveness in adapting to work in selected aspects of the organization's functioning. The research has been conducted using the survey method, observing the provisions on the protection of personal data. The research has been carried out in the last quarter of 2017 at the Czestochowa University of Technology, where 224 students were asked to take part in the study. About 200 correctly filled out sets of questionnaires were received from employed students.

In order to determine the adaptation to work, the group of respondents used the My Work Questionnaire, which included questions about the course of this process in

their workplace. This method allows to distinguish a group of people adapted to work to a high degree and those adapted to a low degree.

The questionnaire has been used to identify the activities aimed at implementing the process of employee adaptation used by the organizations in which the persons participating in the study found employment. Statistics were prepared on the basis of questionnaires. The author is aware of the limitations of the research contained in this article, as it was carried out on a small group of respondents, and the results obtained are not universal. They are only a starting point for further and wider research on a representative sample. For obtaining valuable research results, it will be necessary to expand the set of research tools and increase the sample to include the students from other universities and cities. The results were subjected to the chi-square independence test. On its basis, it was assessed whether the degree of adaptation of people to work depends on the selected factors. The null hypothesis (H0) assumes that there is no statistically significant relationship, while the alternative hypothesis (H1) assumes that such a relationship exists. The level of significance assumed for the tests is α = 0.05.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE OBTAINED RESEARCH RESULTS

On the basis of the obtained data (Table 1), the relationship between gender and work adaptation can be identified. In the group of people adapted to a high degree, there are fewer men than women, but fewer women in the low-adjusted group. Based on the chi-square test, it can be concluded that also in the case of education, a statistically significant relationship can be found in relation to the level of adaptation. A connection was also found between adaptation and occurrence of problems with finding employment in compared groups. Among those adapted to a high degree, there are significantly more people who did not have problems with finding a job. At the same time, there are significantly more people among those who are poorly adapted to work in the organization and who declare problems with finding a job.

Table 1
Characteristics of persons adapted to work in a high and low degree

Specification		People adapted to a high degree	People adapted to a low degree	χ^2
Quantity		101	99	
Gender	Female	64	49	H1
	Male	37	50	
Education	Vocational education	12	12	H1
	Secondary education	35	35	
	Higher education	54	52	
Problems with finding employment in the labor market	Yes	13	85	H1
	No	88	14	
The size of the organization	Up to 50 employees	24	61	H1
	50-100 employees	54	15	
	100-250 employees	10	13	
	250+ employees	13	10	

Source: own study

Groups adapted to a high and low degree differ in terms of characteristics regarding the size of the workplace, namely significantly more people adapted to work to a high degree work in organizations employing from 50 to 100 employees, while people with low adaptation work in organizations employing up to 50 employees. Analysis of individual categories representing different sizes of the organization using the chi-square test shows that there is a significant variation if we consider the size of companies in which people with a high or low degree of adaptation to work are employed.

Preparation of the new employee to perform their duties should be carried out by providing them with information on the organization that is useful for effective functioning in the workplace. The information that the organization should provide to newly hired employees is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
A comparison of people adapted to the organization in a high and low degree in terms of information provided about the organization

Specification	People adapted to a high degree	People adapted to a low degree	χ^2
Explaining the tasks and why they should be done, the scope of responsibility, instructions regarding the implementation of tasks	73%	27%	H1
Difficulties in the implementation of tasks and ways to prevent them	58%	42%	H1
Workplace equipment	67%	33%	H1
How the employee is located in relation to other crew members, familiarizing with colleagues	72%	28%	H1
Characteristics of the organization's operations, market position: clients, partners, contractors	51%	49%	H0
Principles of remuneration (wage schedule, bonuses, increases, deductions, reimbursement of expenses)	49%	51%	H0
Organization of working time (working hours, breaks, non-working days, overtime, holidays)	61%	39%	H1
Motivational factors of an intangible nature - employee development program	63%	37%	H1
Social security of the employee (medical care, pension system, insurance, trade unions, legal counselling)	49%	51%	H0

Source: own study

The obtained results show that in the group of respondents there is a relationship between the adaptation to work and the employee obtaining information on the scope of duties and expectations of the employer. Among those adapted to a high degree, there are significantly more people that have been informed and even provided with instructions on the implementation of tasks. A definitely worse situation in the field of providing this type of information occurs in people with low adaptation to work, where only 27 had the opportunity to learn the instructions on how to perform their tasks.

There is also a significant variation in the other aspects of the information provided. Groups adapted to high and low degree differ in terms of: difficulties that may appear

in the implementation of tasks and ways to prevent them, performed functions and scope of tasks carried out by colleagues, the organization of working time, development talks regarding the workplace.

Efficient implementation of the adaptation process depends mainly on the assigned supervisor for the time of adaptation. His role is to familiarize the newly-employed with work and provide them with information and explanations verbally. The supervisor should strive to arouse interest in the activities of the organization and the nature of work at a given workplace. The opinions of new employees about the supervisor are presented in Table 3.

The obtained results show that not all persons were assigned a guardian during the period of adaptation to work in the organization. In the group of people with a high degree of adaptation, up to ¾ of the respondents were assigned an experienced employee, and among the 18 subjects, the immediate supervisor was most often mentioned. Nearly 50 respondents with a low degree of adaptation indicated a lack of a guardian, and for 24 people, a co-worker was assigned as a supervisor.

Table 3
The person acting as a supervisor in the period of adaptation to work

Actual value				Expected value	
Person acting as a supervisor	**People adapted to a high degree**	**People adapted to a low degree**	**Sum**	**People adapted to a high degree**	**People adapted to a low degree**
Experienced employee	69	11	80	158,4158	161,6162
Immediate supervisor	18	10	28	55,4455	56,5657
Human Resources	9	8	17	33,6634	34,3434
Fellow employee	4	24	28	55,4455	56,5657
No supervisor	1	47	48	95,0495	96,9697
Sum	101	99	200		
Degrees of freedom	4				
Theoretical value	9,4877	H1			

Source: own study

On the basis of the chi-square test, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the type of supervisor during the adaptation period and the level of employee adaptation.

The length of the employee's adjustment period to the workplace is not strictly defined. It depends on many factors: the organization's policy in this area and the personality traits of the newly hired person. The variety of factors affecting the length of the adaptation process means that it can last up to a year. In most companies, the period of adaptation is defined in time, and after its completion, the employee is assessed and the decision about further employment of the employee is made. The analysis of the conclusions on this issue is shown in Table 4.

Analyzing the length of the adaptation period, 35 respondents adapted to a high degree declare that their adaptation to work lasted a month, and for 24 respondents the adaptation took two months. The period of adaptation longer than half a year is

declared by 17 respondents. In the case of 5 people participating in the study, the occupational adaptation was not a planned process but took place spontaneously. This may be due to the fact that the managerial staff does not supervise the adaptation process in the organization, leaving the new employee alone, hoping they will cope with the duties at the new workplace. For 24 people with a low degree of adaptation, the adaptation process took place over a period of one year, and for 13 it lasted more than a year. One respondent did not receive support in the process of introduction to work.

On the basis of the chi-square test, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the duration of the employee's adaptation and their level of adaptation. The results achieved as part of the adaptation process depend to a large extent on the level of communication within the organization. Correct functioning of the internal communication system in the adaptation process can bring positive results. Solutions used by companies are shown in Table 5.

Table 4

Length of the adaptation period

	Actual value			Expected value	
Duration of adaptation process	People adapted to a high degree	People adapted to a low degree	Sum	People adapted to a high degree	People adapted to a low degree
1 week	2	4	6	11,8812	12,1212
2 weeks	10	7	17	33,6634	34,3434
1 month	35	5	40	79,2079	80,8081
2 months	24	13	37	73,2673	74,7475
6 months	13	14	27	53,4653	54,5455
10 months	7	18	25	49,5050	50,5051
1 year	2	24	26	51,4851	52,5253
Still takes place	3	13	16	31,6832	32,3232
Spontaneous adaptation	5	1	6	11,8812	12,1212
Sum	101	99	200		
Degrees of freedom	8				
Theoretical value	15,5073	H1			

Source: own study

Table 5

Tools used during communication support for work adaptation

	Actual value			Expected value	
Specification	People adapted to a high degree	People adapted to a low degree	Sum	People adapted to a high degree	People adapted to a low degree
A corporate informator for adaptation purposes	5	2	7	13,8614	14,1414
Welcome letter (or phone call) from the unit's director	3	8	11	21,7822	22,2222
Invitation to talk to the head of the unit	12	4	16	31,6832	32,3232
E-mail with a biographical	9	4	13	25,7426	26,2626

note of a new employee sent to the rest of the crew					
Integration trips	29	28	57	112,8713	115,1515
Training (initial, complementary, on the job training)	31	29	60	118,8119	121,2121
Professional internships	12	24	36	71,2871	72,7273
Sum	101	99	200		
Degrees of freedom	6				
Theoretical value	12,5916	H1			

Source: own study

The results of the research have shown that the use of different solutions in the field of communication support is a facilitation for a new employee. To implement the adaptation process in the workplace, different types of tools are used that have been recognized by newly hired employees, namely: initial and supplementary training, integration trips and professional internships.

On the basis of the chi-square test, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the tool used in the communication support of adaptation to work and the level of adaptation of the employee.

5. CONCLUSION

The research has shown that the dissemination of good practices in the implementation of formalized procedures and available tools during the implementation of professional adaptation is an effective method of the process of recruitment. Based on the questionnaire, it was found that an appropriate set of instruments is used as part of the organized professional adaptation. Based on the analysis of the questionnaire it was found that the adaptation in the surveyed organizations has the form of an organized adaptation. Only for 6 companies, the adaptation was spontaneous. The duration of adaptation is decisive for the effectiveness of the adaptation process - employees with a high degree of adaptation to the working conditions have adapted in the period of 2 months. For the people that had difficulties with adapting it took longer. Employees with a high degree of adaptation to work receive information about the company regarding tasks at a given position and other important aspects of functioning in the organization. However, in a more difficult position were those who did not obtain sufficient information in terms of duties, expectations and regulations, because this translated into a low degree of their adaptation to work. In companies where a high degree of adaptation has been achieved, the experienced supervisor provided information about the process of professional adaptation. What is worrying is the fact that about 50 employees experienced difficulties in adapting to work due to the lack of a guardian during the process of professional adaptation. Employees also adapt in the social dimension and have information about the organization of work in the team and the roles of colleagues. Companies that correctly manage the adaptation process create conditions for building and maintaining proper interpersonal relationships in the work environment.

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