Review University Without Borders for the Open Society (RUFSO)

The Value Of Designing, Developing And Implementing A Training Course To Face Strategic Managerial Decisions: Human Resource Management In Cyprus

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ABSTRACT

The continues training encourage organisations to achieve strategic managerial decisions and plans. It also helps organisations to become more effective and productive in a very demanding and fast changing global business environment.

The aim of this article is to understand the role of human resource management and to present the need of human development for employees to achieve organisation's targets.

The critical analysis of the results based on an investigation from the higher education sector in Cyprus, will support readers to realize the practical need for lifelong training and personal improvement.

Keywords: Training and Development, Human Resource Management, Organisational culture, Higher Education

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The success of a training course is only obtainable on personal performance improvement, results' evaluation and workplace productivity (Continues Professional Development). The encouragement of employees to participate on training courses affects the organizational behaviour. Well educated organisations operate better, develop employees' skills and improve the quality of products and services.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the study

"Several researchers have successfully used quantitative methods in order to evaluate the relationship between training and employee performance" (Contartesi, 2010; Embry, 2009; Kennedy, 2009; Rouse, 2009a; Rouse & Schuttler, 2009). Personal qualifications and skills differ but there is always something new to learn. This is why organisations are trying to encourage their employees to participate on training courses in a way that will learn behaviour methods to create an effective organisational culture. This article presents the level of effectiveness as well as how training inspires teamworking based on an investigation from higher education sector in Cyprus.

1.3 Research questions

The research questions for this case study were focused on: *What role the internal communication plays for leaders of higher education sector to encourage an implementation of a training course? How human resource officers understand the gaps of personal skills and how they fill those to satisfy the targets of their organisation? On what level, employees of different departments in higher education, are satisfied from their participation on a training course? To what extent employees of a department are involved in the design of a training course in order to satisfy both personal and organisational goals?*

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1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

Every year, the management of each organisation invests a very serious amount of money on the personal development of employees. Continuing education is a practical need for both personal and organizational change. It provides the opportunity to leave anachronistic habits, acquire new knowledge and improve attitudes.

1.2 Research Design

Organisations are part of the community which they operate, can create mainly future employees for the local society. Organisations, in this case higher education universities and colleges, are trying to be close to the society, and very often satisfy its needs and wants arising from a research investigation, which is an important tool to bring closer the two sides. Higher education, and more specific the academic institutes, must operate internally effective, in order to extent the good environment into the local community, which will be their future customers (candidate students). Community members are customers who have the power to create an internal organisational change. When the academic organisations receive the messages coming from the society which they operate, then will design new training courses for their employees. This is a very complex process that needs a serious development. The process, application, development of any training course must be designed by human resource managers creatively, to satisfy the goals of an organisation.

1.3 Data collection

New investigations that need interviews and questionnaires for their implementation might look, sometimes, 'scary' but at the end could benefit all parties related to the research. As much as possible employees in higher education sector should be encouraged to participate in researches to support their management to succeed both horizontally and vertically.

1.4 Study population

The improvement and efficient of an organisation is very much depend on good communication, in order to encode and decode the messages coming from the society. The collaboration between employees, the management and the society is very important

achieve targets. The implementation of oral and written communication needs the attention of managers in order to understand needs and complete gaps.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

3.1 Biographical Characteristics of the Respondents

3.1.1 Department of Human Resource Management at a public university

Mrs A.Z.K., a Human Resource officer at the University of Cyprus, very kindly accepted to answer investigating questions and provided tangible information about the development of their employees. All given information, with respect to the policies and norms of university, have received and evaluated. Data collected includes the costs and expenses spent on developing and participating on training courses, as well as financial resources which could support the organisation to cover the costs. As explained, the university in most cases covers around 50% of the costs and the rest from funding coming from the European Union (EU). In addition, 50% of the total available amounts is going to training courses for administrative staff, 40% of the budget to covers head managerial development, and 10% for other expenses like participating in seminars in abroad.

3.1.2 Training and Development Office – Private University

The next interview has been arranged at a private university (EUC) with a training and development officer. According to Mr S.C, "the University gives priority to immediate needs in training and development, as defined by the heads of the schools, and heads of the departments, which are aligned with strategic objectives of the University"... "The provision of quality and targeted training is always developed with good communication between employees and the head of their management". Training courses on the target, which means for specific reasons, are spent at a partner institution in abroad, which aims on improving the university's administration. Mr S.C. argued that "the annual amount of average training needs for a 4 to 5 days per person is around €250.000 Euros. According to Mr S.C. "the reviewing of training needs for each department and school arise from the term 360th feedback which is used to refer to multi-rater feedback. The reviewing of

training provides a better way to capture the complexities of performance, and often is useful to prepare a survey questionnaire and statistical analysis. The feedback can be collected from different staff levels, in order to be able to observe the individual in a limited range of situations. Furthermore, Mr S.C. argued during the interview that the Training and Development Office of the European University Cyprus (EUC) decides about the rates of education in semester basis based on the EFQM system, according to the strategic target of the University".

3.1.3 Administrative Staff – Public University

Miss K.V., an Officer at the Academic Affairs and Student Welfare of the University of Cyprus, receives enquiries from the employees in relation to the training and development programs. Miss K.V said that "the Human Resource department sends once a year to the Academic Affairs office, a general questionnaire and asks employees about their needs for training". All enquiries are collected and send for approval.

3.1.4 Academic Staff – Private University

Human Resource Lecturer, Dr C.L.K, mentioned during the interview that "the University does not organise training courses for its staff very often, basically for economic reasons, except in special cases, like soft skills programs i.e. moodle platform or special needs student's satisfaction courses.

3.1.5 Human Resource Management – Private University

Limited time for an interview, in a very busy environment Mrs M.K, secretary at the Department of Human Resources, said that "the university's policy is not to give any detail information to people outside the university regarding its staff and budgets". Mrs M.K mentioned that until the end of April 2018, the number of administration personnel attended in training programs were 15 employees, and the number of faculty personnel attended in training programs were 26 persons. Unfortunately, due to the limited time, it was difficult to collect information from previous years to compare data.

3.1.6 Training and Development Center – Private University

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The 'Continuing Education and Professional Development Training Centre' offers courses related to computing and technology improvement for businesses which are operating in the market of Cyprus. According to the Training Manager of the Center they can always offer flexible options to satisfy organisations' needs, with updated contents, and special arrangements based on group sizes. Mrs S.P argued that: "they give the tools for the improvement of needs in someone's career"..... "The high standards and excellent facilities that ensure a learning success for the organizations"... "Personal development training courses, gain skills in minimizing and dealing with stress which helps to avoid feeling overwhelmed in any area of life".

3.1.7 Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA)

The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is "a semi-government organization which originally established under the provisions of Law 21 of 1974 under the name of Industrial Training Authority of Cyprus" (HRDA 2019:2). "It has been designed to meet the needs of the economy as a whole, as well as to support those enterprises that need some help and for the labor force". Mr. E. S., Human Resource Officer of the Training Directorate at the HRDA, is responsible "for the assessment of the economy's manpower training needs, the formulation of training policies and the upgrading of the training system". Mr. E.S. said during the interview that "a participant should meet the training needs of existing staff, and each training has a new concept and method to specialized topics aimed based on the planning and implementation of a training course from business conducted either in Cyprus or in abroad if necessary". According to the HRDA, "in the year 2015 (HRDA 2015:28) 5393 training programs were subsidized for 57152 participants and the total expenditure amounted to €12.494.614. There was an increase compared to 5012 training programs, and 52829 participants from €10.542.522 in 2014 (HRDA 2014:21)"… "95% of the programs implemented in 2015 fell in the category of Continuing Training, whereas the percentage for Initial Training was only 5%". In 2016, 5210 training programs have been scheduled for 45568 participants.27499 participations of employees were subsidised compared to 32094 in 2015. The total amount expenditure amounted to €4.684.886. In 2018, 45084 employees (men and women) have participated in

4861 training courses (HRDA 2018:27). Each year, the HRD Authority offered two full scholarships to its staff members to study a Bachelor and Master level degree at a selected higher education institution of Cyprus. The amount covered by the HRDA for training has dramatically increased from €35.541 Euros in 2010 to €102.352 Euros in 2016. In 2018 the total expenditures amounted to €3.923.524 compared to €5.246.567 in 2017.

3.2 Analysis of results

3.2.1 Continues Training and Human Resource Development

Harrison (2008, p.5) mentioned that "The term Human Resource Development has never been attractive to practitioners. It refers to people as a 'resource' to putting people on a par with money, materials and equipment". Harrison (2008) argued that "Training and Development is a significant opportunity for employees because will benefit both themselves as well the organization that are working for". However, 'training is only one way of achieving development, and to highlight it in this way is to give it a prominence that can be dangerous' (Harrison 2008:5).

Below there is a graphical practical presentation of the above processes based on the results received from this research. There is a graph of a learning investment route as well as the graph of the training and development route:
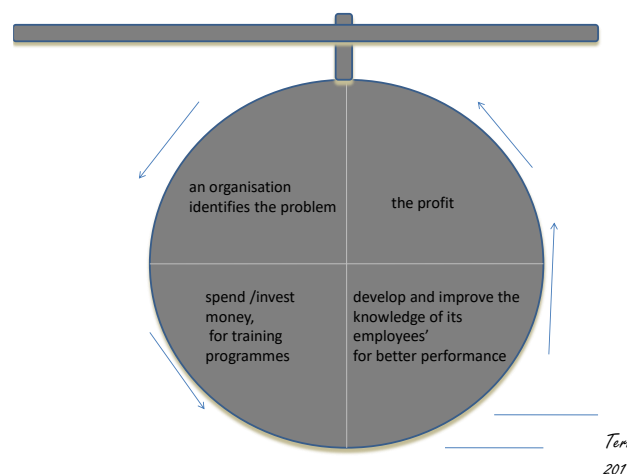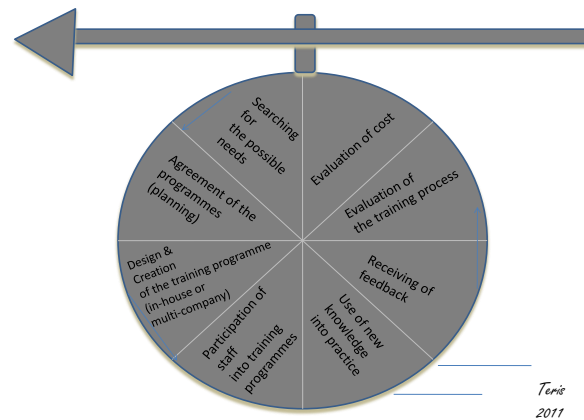

Learning investment route
Source: Colocassides, E.M (2011)

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Training and Development route

Source: Colocassides, E.M (2011)

4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary

This article presents the results collected from the interviews and questionnaires in relation to continuous training. Both private and public universities are using, on a yearly basis, the 360-degree method for the evaluation of their staff. This method gives the opportunity to collect information which is related to the strengths and weaknesses of the employees and the organisations. The use of 360-degree strategy helps organisations to focus on each individual employee who participate on a training course.

4.2 Conclusions and Recommendations of research

The results of this research showed once again the importance of continuing use of training for business education. This research has also shown that despite the financial or epidemiological problems that arise, those do not affect the need for continuing education, although in some cases the need to reduce costs is inevitable. It is at this point that the financial support of the European Union for the Member States comes to support the

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important work done by companies operating in the European Union, which have to face a very difficult a global business environment with many challenges.

It is obvious that all companies have both strengths and weaknesses which they try to deal with through important decisions made by their managements. The continuous research presented by various researchers through approved publications, helps and supports the smoother operation of companies in the field in which they operate. For example, educational institutions follow international rules and controls that help both their proper functioning and the safe promotion of their curricula. They also improve the quality of work internally in the organization, thus creating more efficient and healthy environments in the workplace, significantly improving it.

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