

Jolanta Bartkowiak-Stawska

The use of Assessment Centre and Development Centre in the improvement of employee competencies (abstract)

Human resource management in today's organizations is confronted with new challenges resulting from different factors. Two of the key factors are caused by, the level of competitiveness in certain markets of particular industries, and human resources themselves. Enterprises influence their employees by investing in their competencies, which is then expected in turn to yield a return to the organization.

The main research problem for the dissertation is an analysis of possibilities and ways of utilization of Assessment Centre (AC) and Development Centre (DC) methods in the improvement of employee competencies. This research problem also refers to an evaluation of effectiveness of these methods in supporting management of human resources in organizations in Poland. The researched problem is formed in a question : in which situations, in what way, and with what kind of effectiveness do the Assessment Centre and Development Centre methods support the improvement of employee competencies? The main aim of the dissertation is to show the ways and conditions of AC and DC effective use in the improvement of employee competencies in the context of human resource management in an organization. Additional aims of the dissertation have both cognitive and applied character. The cognitive aim of the dissertation concerns complimenting and systemizing of the applied knowledge of Assessment Centre and Development Centre use to improve employee competencies, in the context of human resource management. In turn, the applied aim of the dissertation involves the development of practice-oriented recommendations relating to the ways and conditions of these methods use to improve employee competencies. These competencies are of paramount importance for the development and establishment of competitive advantage within an organization. The main and additional aims of the dissertation have been met by answering the research questions which at the same time have influenced the sequence of conducted literature research and empirical analysis.

The dissertation consists of four chapters. In the first chapter an attempt is made to define what employees improvement is and how it fits within latest concepts in human resource management. Next the importance of competences and their role in the system of human resource management are discussed. The authoress points out the significance competencies improvement can play for both an organization and their employees. The second chapter focuses on the subject of research, that is, Assessment Centre and

Development Centre methods. The authoress attempts to characterize Assessment Centres and Development Centres taking into consideration an aspect of their use in the implementation of human resource management processes within an organization. The third chapter discusses theoretically case study methods applied in order to conduct empirical research. The authoress discusses the research stages in the examination procedure of the case study which progress and chronology of conducted field studies in the chosen six enterprises have been subjected to. This part of the dissertation comprises of the detailed descriptions showing practical application of AC and DC methods, which are made possible by using different research techniques within the case study and, additionally, a discussion of a questionnaire used supplementary in order to look at the subject of research from different perspectives. It allowed to reach the cognitive aim of the dissertation. The collected research data form the basis for the fourth chapter. The last part of the dissertation begins with the collective analysis of gathered empirical data and the critical analysis, which it is based on. The chapter includes recommendations regarding the ways and conditions of effective use of Assessment Centre and Development Centre methods, in the improvement of employee competencies. The authoress made an attempt of analysis and evaluation of conducive and hindering factors of AC and DC methods implementation in enterprises as well as showed the recommendations for the management in terms of their usage in human resource management processes. The fourth chapter concludes with the ways of Assessment Centres and Development Centres improvement in enterprises functioning in Poland, as well as with possibilities and directions for further exploration in the discussed researched problem.

The dissertation concludes with a summary taking into consideration the main findings presented in the previous parts. It also recommends further directions in the future research explorations of the undertaken subject.