

Editorial

Dear readers,

This volume of the scientific journal Human Resources Management & Ergonomics brings to your attention new scientific works introducing the results of theoretical and practical research, as well as new findings in the field of human potential development and ergonomics.

The recent labour market is markedly affected by globalization processes, new technologies, and by the high speed of gaining knowledge. On the other hand, the changes in human relations start to play an important role. The constantly changing labour market conditions increase the requirements for the existing and potential labour force. Employers seek knowledge, skills, and abilities while “creativity” is among the most often used words in job interviews and in the recent employees’ performance assessment. Soft skills, i.e. communication and presentation skills, team work, resistance against stress, assertiveness, etc. become a competitive advantage because there are often more equally qualified candidates applying for a single job opportunity.

Among the globalization effects is obviously a new working team structure where people of different age, gender, and nationality meet to work together. Management theories therefore reflect such diversity as a “summarized number of diversities among members of a certain social unit” (Harrison, Sin, 2005), also reflected in different attitudes, skills and knowledge.

Diversity management is an attitude respecting and underlining the diversity at work as a competitive advantage stemming from a better use of an individual’s potential.

It has been demonstrated that team diversity leads to the increased work effectiveness. Diversity management can have several forms: one of those is gender management. The gender management system (GMS) is defined by the Commonwealth Secretariat (1999) as a network of structures, mechanisms and processes interwoven with the existing organizational system and enabling its users to make, plan, monitor and verify the gender issues implementation into the work organization.

Among the recently discussed problems is gender balance and legislation change in a way enabling a certain percentage of women being represented in statutory bodies. Perhaps there are not as many women who desire to work in top management positions as our law-givers might think. What is the situation in businesses? I came across companies with about 30% women in the top management, which is much more than the number of women in both the Houses of the Czech Parliament (only around 20% women).

Gender policy, however, does not lay in a mere enumeration of men and women represented in certain positions. The most important issue involves equal salary, equal opportunities of education, and remunerative work positions for women, as well as the equal status in the performance of top management positions both in business and in politics. Another important factor comes to the fore: how to make optimized conditions for harmonization of the work and private life of employees. Employers usually offer working hour adjustment (flexible hours, part-time job, etc.) or home office work, which is not sufficient, not speaking about the fact that in some positions it is impossible.

The different preferences of individual options between men and women also point out the need to discuss the problem in detail, because as a result of unsuitable and rigid working conditions, the good prospect employees tend to leave the company.

We can argue whether it is management or leadership in question, or we can choose to agree with Henry Mintzberg (2004) in his recommendation not to differentiate between the two notions, since it is a well known fact that „*managers who are not able to lead people are boring and unconvincing. On the contrary, the leaders who fail to carry out managerial roles are not approachable and are out of touch with life.*”

It is obvious that people, their potential, skills and abilities are inevitable, making the company's profit and being the holders of the company know-how. All of this represents a challenge for working team managers and for the whole company management. Business experience corresponds with the theory in proving that a company development is only feasible where effective management of creative and talented people exists.

Individual texts in this volume illustrate the creativity and scientific enthusiasm of the authors in solving specific problems. I am convinced that the contributions offer the readers a number of new findings and questions to discuss.

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