

## **HARNESSING THE HUMAN POTENTIAL TEAMS IN CO-OPERATIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF EUROPEAN MANAGEMENT**

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### *Abstract*

*Human potential was and is among the most valuable resources that each organization has, and also one of the decisive resources for an efficient business activity and its evolution in performance. All management functions are performed by people while success or failure of the management activity depends on acquiring the art of working with people. When the top managers succeed to harness the potential of the employees so that they become not subordinates but teammates in the future activities of the organization, we can already speak about highly qualified professionals who generate sustainable development of the employing company.*

*The research will mainly focus on the comparative study of approaches practiced in European countries along with co-operative enterprises from our country, researching the training level and theoretical-practical training provided by authorized institutions in these domains.*

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**Keywords:** *co-operative organization, human potential, team, subordinates, teammates, team spirit.*

### **1. Introduction**

One of the oldest forms of activity is considered consumer cooperation. It started with the purpose of satisfying the existent needs by common associating, voluntary agreement and by responsible participation in the activities promoted with the aim of mutual help and guidance on the democratic principle. In the organizational aspect of cooperative work there was promoted the idea of equal and equidistant co-participation of all cooperative members, this being one of the defining and distinctive features of the cooperative management. Human resources, involved in the cooperative activity, as a rule, hold the status of cooperative members. They become the absolute driving force of cooperative's development and evolution by the attitude towards undertaken work and responsibility proved by earnings of labor and by the concern for the whole society which essential part is presented.

Human Resources in the co-operative system are treated according to their importance in the

production of goods or services, along with those financial, material and information ones, but as a value they are predominant, so they must be paid more attention to from the organizational management.

The continued and qualitative development of the co-operative human resources will be done so as to fully implement the creative potential of all staff, they being of highly importance for the managers. Therefore, the cooperative organizational management applies and develops various management methods and specific techniques which motivate and generate development of partnership relations among employees and contributes to the appearance of team spirit, forming an integral part with the organization.

Human resources, addressed by the held capacities, skills and interest towards the activity, they are trained in, constitute the main *de jure* and *de facto* resource, current and future of the co-operative organization that determine decisively the potential development and stability of the economic unit.

The team has a diversified approach in the specialty literature, with different concepts depending on the theme of working conditions, forms of work's organization accepted within the organizational framework and also depends on the degree of autonomy offered by company's management [2], at the same time, certainly without any doubts, it aims to improve all existing processes within the enterprise. So, the team is conceived as groups of employees who have at least some common tasks and where the team members are authorized to regulate mutually the joint execution of these tasks.

The development of interpersonal relationships and team spirit within the co-operative organization is in itself an essential activity for obtaining and registering performances in human resource management, opting for a range of a wider evolution and taking the strategic position of managing the human resources.

## **2. Current degree of investigation of the problem and the purpose of research**

In the present research we follow the aim to highlight the appropriate training of human resources in improving the co-operative organizational management by focusing the human resources in an integrated team with innovative spirit and dominated by the interest of achieving the mission of the employing organization, also realizing that every employee has his role, his importance in achieving the desired success.

Developing a team spirit in the co-operative world is not possible without creating a collaborative working environment. Tackling successfully the problem of involving the employees in the company's activity by adjusting their own interests with those of the co-operative organization remains up-to-date in this century too. In this chapter we can state some gaps concerning the care of managers and even often attest the lack of data in the agenda of co-operative organization's management. Moreover, we acknowledge the lack of researches done in the Republic of Moldova for a deep knowledge of factors generating the lack of employees' interest / motivation or the indifference towards human resources for the concerns of the co-operatives' management by blindly following these directives, accepting only the position of performer and not of creator, not of subordinates and not of interested personnel interested to become an "engine" of organizational changes.

Researches done in the co-operative system confirmed that managers recognize the need to motivate the employees to participate in creating something new, to make changes that can be succeeded by real involvement of teammates, it recognizes indirectly that our success depends on working together as a team and on the quality of unfolding these activities.

Each team member within the organization must be able to rely on the nearby colleague, asking for advice and contributing to the undertaken activity. Teamwork constitutes, actually, in existence of trust one towards the other, being safe and showing that the skills and knowledge of the colleague will help to complete the task and achieve the purpose or obligations attributed to this job, position.

Teamwork is perceived, especially as a cooperative activity with colleagues, which aim is to achieve a common goal, and this requires taking decisions by mutual agreement on the actions they will perform, at the same time taking responsibility for the successful completion of tasks and from this point of view one of the strengths of a person who craves for a position is presenting arguments that he is able to work in a team.

Another aspect of the research shows the usefulness of building the team in co-operative organizations, how useful this form of organization would be and whether it is feasible or not.

A number of recent researches confirm the positive impact of teamwork on labor productivity and cooperative efficiency through a greater autonomy of workplace, a deeper responsibility and satisfaction.

The team must always remain on the positions of real feedback, be open and be responsive to change, but its members are on ongoing improvement course, certainly contributing to the set up of forceful relations, generating positive effects present as individual performances, but necessarily as a group too.

### **3. Applied material and methods**

The problem of achieving efficient business issues through teamwork is typical for the North, East and West European countries, where even if researches in this context have been made, then their publication is relative.

Following the research undertaken in the co-operative organizations it was discovered that there are a number of psychological factors that can inhibit or stimulate their performance. In this way, we become aware of certain phenomena, which may constitute an obstacle towards the performance of the team. In order to effectively achieve a task the team must be treated as a social unit which uses its full potential in achieving this task. However, there can appear various obstacles: problems of emotional character or others.

To promote the welfare of its members, the team must reflect on how we can provide support or mitigate conflicts and determine the general social climate of the group. It is very difficult for a team to achieve a harmonious correlation between work climate and the successful achieving of tasks. Obviously, it is difficult to reconcile both, and this often fails, because there was found a coexistence of four teams within the co-operative organizations, figure 1.

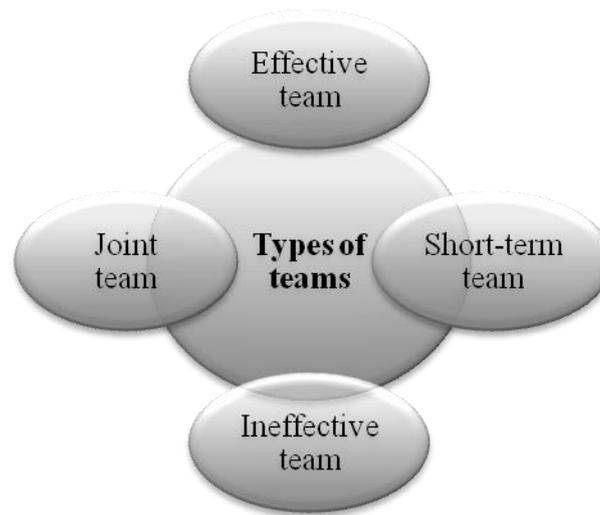


Figure 1: Types of teams in the co-operative organizations

Source: author's own development

Team work in the co-operative organizations is characterized by the most efficient operation, meets members who can work together and communicate well among them, are able to modify their objectives and strategies depending on the circumstances, actually promoted by willingness to cooperate over a long period. The team where there is a warm climate and solidarity among members, is notable for clarity, tends to avoid any possible conflict or conflicting discussions. The next category is the ineffective team which team members are not satisfied with both the nature of interpersonal relationships and the quality of their work and thus not working on any plan. The fourth category of teams is the one which members do not want long term collaboration, and thus do not cultivate rather emotional human relations, performing the task at a satisfactory level, this undermining the team's creativity.

In a management team it is welcomed to focus on the development of members who find their motivation in work and do not spend time solving the problems of all underperforming teammates.

The employees work for recognition and this is one of the motivating requirements for the employees from the local cooperative system, moreover, in the team they seek for a family-attitude, seek to find elements that define them as happy ones.

The employees often follow trainings in different areas and with different purposes, but do not ask themselves where they will apply the new, formed skills or whether they succeed to form them.

The employees need recognition by participating in solving various problems or by managing the situation. People want to be involved but the fear of being mistaken stops them, especially if they are punished / penalized for the mistakes, so creativity is stopped, in this context the managers need to boost the employee's involvement by freedom of creativity, by tolerating the obvious errors during the exploitation of something the new, necessary changes that are tangent and imposed by the philosophy of learning.

Currently, the biggest challenge for the co-operative organizations is to place on the sales market new, high quality goods / services, and keep up with changes in demand which the customers want, or requires this work to be segmented and organized on roles, as to obtain maximum productivity with minimal costs. These requirements call to search for new forms of organizing

work based on the promotion of good interpersonal relationships at work and the existence of skills for innovation and changes of the employer.

#### 4. Obtained results and discussion

For a team to score success / performance in a co-operative organization, it is necessary to develop: the attitudes of colleagues who have the ability to work in teams, involvement, empathy, be positive, oriented towards obtaining concrete results and lead to the development of the four functions of teamwork, figure 2.

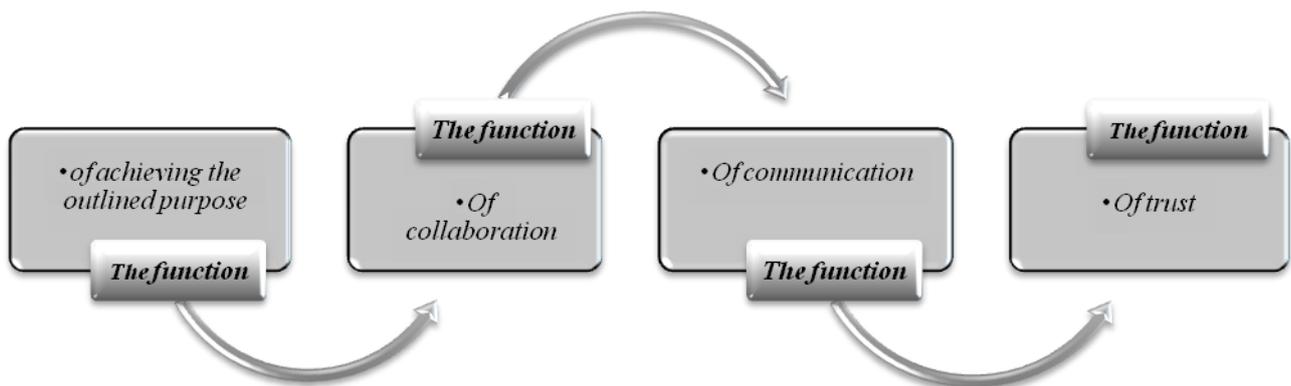


Figure 2: Functions of teamwork

Source: author's own development

The manager has the task to create a team based on ability to be willing to compromise, having an earning interest for all, to be open to give a touch of altruism for all team members.

In a performance team it is necessary to develop along the whole activity encouragement by fostering the debate of the issue without attacking the colleague with a contradictory position, in such a way it will be possible to create partnership relations in the team.

People are creatures who work in teams to achieve much higher results than working individually, isolated.

The performance of a team means the results recorded in joint work, but it depends on the composition of informal roles what each employee / member of the team makes, which is oriented towards results, oriented towards relations with other teams, with others, the role of orientation to innovations, those who seek novelty, for another way of working, handling things, oriented towards processes, focused on fulfilling personal values. The emphasis will be put on the values which are important to all team members. It is important to keep in mind skidding behavioral slips that can attract the entire team.

Teamwork leads to awareness, positive perception and agreeing between team members, so, cohesion, spirit entity is continually developing but conflict situations become rarer, more controllable and have a less hostile way of resolving, nondestructive but beneficial one. Correctly directed team will transform the working group into a team where the members will be perceived as members of a family who work together to obtain a specific result, being waited by every

teammate.

Team work is a form where members collaborate and simultaneously compete, so, they can certainly harness their potential through performed work in competition with the teammate, from whom he also can learn new skills, learn new tactics, techniques and working methods, in such a way people will be discovered not only as employees of the company. Teamwork is fundamental and fostered by organizational culture and the climate of cooperation among members, this involving mutual trust, otherwise teamwork is ineffective.

The researches confirm the fact that the team members from the co-operative organizations feel the need to be really involved by the opportunity to voice their positions through developing social relationships, as well as, opportunities to take some practice from other colleagues and to help, including by self-development support and by making the commitment to become a more competitive specialist.

## 5. Conclusions

2. The process of developing the relations and team spirit of employees of any consumer cooperatives has a great impact on motivating their work, so we conclude that this is a continuous activity in the organization and represents a complex process of actions and of psycho-social knowledge of the employee.
3. Human resources, involved in the cooperative system, are, obviously, every personality with an ego, with concrete interests and perceptions of the importance and their own vision of self-realization, but all tend to develop those activities that cause satisfaction through new knowledge, through understanding of personal development, by recognizing the importance of the employee, so we conclude that in any organization it is necessary to conduct researches to estimate the level of professional advancement of human resources and their promotion in relation to the registered efforts and successes.
4. Complete employees' involvement in their personal interest, helping them, individually motivating, offering them every available form of learning.
5. People do not imply because of lack of formal authority, do not know how to do or get involved, knowing the benefits followed at cooperative or at individual / team levels. A team is inspired by recognizing, rivalry and identity. Team motivation is because much of its identity - explaining who they are.
6. People need socializing, by promoting informal communication, by accepting cultural aspects of the colleagues.
7. If you are asked to know a wide range of knowledge, opinions, positions, the performance result of joint work is much more important and larger than the individual success.
8. By team working we facilitate the domination of a working environment with features of exchanging the information and practical -theoretical knowledge, we increase the innovation potential by encouraging the growth of capital gains of goods or services, employees obtain the skills of safe problem solving, adapting easily to all colleagues working environments and the appearance of new forms of growth and local and regional economic regeneration.

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### Rezumat

*Potențialul uman a fost și este printre cele mai de valoare resurse pe care le are fiecare organizație. Ea este una din resursele decisive ale activității eficiente și a evoluției de performanță a acesteia. Toate funcțiile conducerii se realizează prin oameni, succesul sau eșecul activității de conducere depinzând de însușirea artei de a munci cu oamenii. În momentul în care managerii de vârf reușesc să valorifice potențialul angajaților, astfel încât aceștia să devină nu subordonați ci coechipieri în activitățile de viitor ale organizației, deja putem vorbi de profesioniști cu o calificare destul de înaltă care pot conduce la dezvoltarea durabilă a firmei angajatoare.*

*Cercetarea, în principiu, se concentrează pe studiul comparativ al abordărilor practicate în țările europene în paralel cu întreprinderile cooperatiste din țară, investigându-se nivelul de pregătire și instruire teoretico-practic oferit de instituțiile abilitate în domeniile respective.*

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**Cuvinte-cheie:** organizație cooperatistă, potențial uman, echipa de muncă, subalterni, coechipieri, spirit de echipă.

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### Аннотация

*Человеческий потенциал был и является одним из наиболее ценных ресурсов, находящийся в ведении каждой организации. Это один из важнейших критериев, определяющий эффективную деятельность и развитие производственных показателей. Все функции управления достигаются людьми, успех или неудача управленческой деятельности зависит от искусства работы с людьми. В случае, когда топ-менеджеры в состоянии реализовать потенциал сотрудников, так чтобы те не становились простыми подчиненными, а были одной командой для будущего развития деятельности организации, только при этом мы уже можем говорить о профессионалах с достаточно высокой квалификацией, которые обусловят предпосылки к устойчивому развитию компании-работодателя.*

*Исследование, в принципе, основывается на сравнительном анализе подходов, практикующихся в европейских странах, наряду с кооперативными предприятиями страны, путем рассмотрения теоретического и практического уровня обучения и подготовки кадров, обеспеченного уполномоченными организациями в этой области.*

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**Ключевые слова:** кооперативная организация, человеческий потенциал, работа в команде, подчинённые, сотрудники, командный дух.

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