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THE PROBLEM OF MOTIVATION TO WORK IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

Abstract: The paper focuses on the managerial and legal context of motivating employees of public organizations. Particular attention was paid to the construction of remuneration systems dedicated for the employees in local governments. The rest of the article shows some of the components of the incentive system. The role of rewards, motivating ways of defining goals and life-work balance are discussed. The paper presents as well synthetic and analytical evaluation tasks necessary for improvement of human resources management in commune offices.

Keywords: Motivation System, Public Management, Human Resource Management

1. INTRODUCTION

Conditions and targets of work in public administration significantly differ from those in business organisations. Thus a different incentive system must be constructed as part of remuneration system.

Motivating employees is one of the key functions of human resources management. It fosters efficiency in meeting strategic and current goals in public administration and gives a public organisation a status of an employee-friendly workplace.

Human resources management includes mainly making managerial and operational decisions in an effort to ensure that an organisation is properly staffed in terms of personnel quality and quantity. It is necessary thus to define legal conditions under which public organisations function.

Significant improvement of motivation to work entails defining the current state of motivational factors, particularly revising the transparency and coherency of the remuneration system. The remuneration system must correspond with both the needs of the organisation and the current state of knowledge in the field of human resources management. Duties specific for particular positions, employees' qualifications and work performance must be considered.

This paper describes some of the components of the incentive system. The role of rewards, motivating ways of defining goals

and life-work balance are discussed. An example incentive system in a commune office is discussed.

The paper presents as well synthetic and analytical evaluation tasks necessary for improvement of human resources management in commune offices¹.

2. CHARACTER OF WORK IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration is a system consisting of people organised around interconnected bodies, legally formed and vested with powers and duties to act constantly in public interest on behalf of the state, and with restrictions on its actions. It may be understood as a single organisation that consists of smaller organisational units, and therefore of people having necessary legal instruments to act on behalf of and within the existing law [1].

Improvement in management of public administration services is achieved through increase in both availability of the services and in their quality. Universal availability and high quality of the services is achieved through competent management in public

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administration units, that is: creating conditions for efficient service on the basis of defined service standards and the knowledge of the market of services providers.

Qualities of human resources management in public organisations include [2]:

- specific mission and objectives: the objective of a business organisation is making a profit, while in the case of a public organisation the usually highlighted objectives are efficiency, legality and empowerment of clients (citizens),
- specific motivation to work, referred to as *Public Service Motivation*: it is assumed that employees of public organisations are more likely to sacrifice in service to others, are to a great extent motivated by the opportunity to participate in policy-making processes with which they often identify, want to act in public interest and for social justice and are frequently guided by patriotic feelings,
- hierarchical organisational culture: complex administrative procedures and a gulf between regular employees and management are emphasised by those who transferred from business to public organisations.

The key problem in public administration in Poland is the low institutional capacity to analyse unit cost of services and to define their quality parameters, which are inherently connected with costs.

Implementation of performance budget on a larger scale seems to be the right solution here, as it supports an effective remuneration system. Tasks become clearer and better defined and work performance becomes easier to evaluate.

Low capacity to analyse costs and quality of services in administration results in limited possibility to create standards for services and improve those standards.

Standards are understood here as parameters that administration will comply with. Other problems of local government offices in Poland are: reluctance to plan public services on annual basis and generally on a long-term basis as well as limited leverage of non-public organisations in providing public services.

As M. Drozdowski rightly notices, political changes that have taken place in

Poland over the past twenty-five years influenced functioning of the public sphere in the following way [3]:

- there has been increase in the complexity of the environment of public organisations,
- the functioning of public institutions has been considerably smoother,
- changes have occurred in attitudes, value systems, standards of behaviour and in the whole organisational culture of public organisations.

3. TASKS OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENTS IN PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS

Reasons for implementation of long-term strategy of operations in the realm of human resources may be different for particular organisations and are connected with the influence of different elements of internal and external environment. The most important include [3]:

- strong competition among public organisations (e.g. for grants and funds) which necessitates consistent improvement in personnel quality;
- the complexity of contemporary public organisations and their environment (e.g. in the sense of their financial and legal structure), which makes short-term operational decisions in human resources management inefficient;
- slow growth in many public organisations, which deprives human resources management of the classic incentive to more effective work;
- the necessity to adjust to state interference in personnel policies of public organisations;
- the growing quality of human resources: employees' growing competence and qualifications which result in shift in work values and higher expectations.

As far as motivating employees is concerned, the main tasks of human resources departments in commune offices are thus [4]:

- to analyse proposals of pay increase in the context of the commune budget and to calculate the cost of bonuses,
- to shape appropriate interpersonal relations in the work environment (including cooperation between

administration officials and service employees),

- to forecast the cost of remuneration on the basis of predicted number of employees, promotion, and the level of salaries,
- to prepare analyses and reports on the mean salary or the differences in salary levels according to position, experience and qualifications,
- to collect and process information on the lowest salary and on the gap between target salary and real salary for a given position,
- to administer salary analyses and prepare comparative analyses,
- to foster development of work potential,
- to define remuneration policy and to use other incentives (both financial and non-financial), also to minimise the risk of corruption among officials,
- to define forms and scope of employees' participation in running the office.

The following research tasks concerning remuneration in local government offices are recommended [4]:

- to analyse how remuneration regulations work in practice,
- to identify reasons for lack of remuneration regulations and to state how and by when they must be prepared,
- to analyse the availability of remuneration regulations to employees,
- - to analyse to what extent the mayor's, province marshal's, province governor's or general director's awards are used as incentive,
- to check if awards regulations exist in a written form,
- to identify reasons for lack of awards and bonuses regulations and to state how and by when they must be prepared,
- to identify award criteria for the mayor's (the province marshal's, province governor's, the general director's) award,
- in the case of local government offices: to define the scope of commission-based remuneration for performance in administrative enforcement.

4. ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION

E.M. Mone and M. London point out that an engaged employee is someone who feels involved, committed, passionate and empowered and demonstrates those feelings in work behaviour. The problem of motivation to work is directly connected with ways of making an employee feel engaged in work.

Mone and London suggest the following actions be taken [5]:

- establishing a foundation of trust and empowerment with the employees,
- ensuring that employees have challenging and meaningful work and that they clarify its importance to the organization,
- establishing clear performance goals for the employees that are challenging and aligned with overall workgroup and organization goals,
- establishing clear development goals for the employees and help them to understand the growth opportunities available to them,
- regularly communication with the employees about their goals and the organizations goals in order to ensure their work is aligned with corporate objectives and to help them recognize their efforts are meaningful and valuable,
- providing ongoing coaching and feedback to the employees to ensure performance and development are on track,
- recognizing and rewarding the employees for their achievements and successes,
- encouraging the employees to be innovative and creative,
- conducting fair and effective performance appraisal discussions,
- fostering team-level learning and development in support of group-level engagement and performance,
- monitoring the overall climate and efforts of the employees and teams ensuring that organization demands do not lead to burnout.

An interesting approach to the problem of motivating employees is found in the work of Canadian researchers A. Saks and J.A. Gruman. They say, it is possible to make organizations more effective through organizational socialization.

Their research shows that 'integration of

SHRM theory and organizational socialization research indicates that organizational socialization can influence organizational outcomes (operational and financial) through: newcomer adjustment (human capital, motivation, social capital, and psychological capital variables) and traditional socialization/HR outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance and reduced turnover' [6].

5. EVALUATION TASKS IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS

Synthetic and analytical evaluation tasks necessary for improvement of human resources management in commune offices are shown in table 1. As far as incentive systems are concerned, it is of paramount importance to [4]:

- evaluate labour code compliance,
- measure cost of work,
- evaluate how motivating remuneration system works,
- evaluate the extent to which remuneration rules are familiar and transparent to employees.

Table 1. Synthetic and analytical evaluation tasks necessary for improvement of human resources management in commune offices [4]

Synthetic evaluation tasks	Analytical evaluation tasks
Analysis and evaluation of the process of planning staff recruitment	1. To evaluate if recruitment strategy was appropriate 2. To evaluate the scope of employed planning methods
Analysis and evaluation of recruitment process	1. To evaluate law compliance in recruitment process 2. To evaluate effectiveness of recruitment 3. To evaluate how advanced recruitment techniques were used
Analysis and evaluation of remuneration process	1. To evaluate labour code compliance 2. To measure cost of work 3. To evaluate how

	motivating remuneration system is 4. To evaluate how familiar and transparent remuneration rules are to employees
Analysis and evaluation of employee evaluation procedures and promotion procedures	1. To evaluate law compliance in employee evaluation process 2. To evaluate how advanced evaluation methods and promotion procedures were used 3. To evaluate how familiar employees are with evaluation and promotion procedures 4. To evaluate how results of employee evaluation influenced promotion and remuneration
Analysis and evaluation of professional development courses	1. To evaluate the level of professional qualifications 2. To evaluate how advanced were the training methods used 3. To evaluate if the training records are correct 4. To evaluate effectiveness of training
Analysis and evaluation of how compliance with code of ethics for local government employees is supervised	1. To evaluate compliance with legal anti-corruption regulations 2. To evaluate how advanced procedures of promoting ethical conduct are 3. To evaluate how involved employees are in preparing the code of ethics 4. To evaluate employee training in professional adherence to high ethical standards 5. To evaluate methods of evaluation of the procedures that are used.
Analysis and evaluation of HR management	1. To evaluate if HR department is properly placed in the organizational structure of an office 2. To evaluate competence of HR department employees 3. To evaluate how well-

	<p>organized personnel information system is</p> <p>4. To evaluate how advanced information technologies used in HR department are</p> <p>5. To evaluate the scope of efficiency analyses of HR management</p> <p>6. To evaluate effectiveness in shaping work conditions and work relations</p> <p>7. To evaluate to what extent personnel counselling is used</p>
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6. EMPLOYEE AWARDS

Due to specific character of work in public administration, awards are a common incentive here.

Apart from monthly salary, awards and premiums are paid to employees as part of the incentive system. In practice both terms are often used interchangeably or not used in accordance to their legal definitions.

A premium and conditions under which it is paid are stipulated in organizational regulations or in the employment contract, while an award may or may not be paid by the employer as it is a discretionary benefit.

Paying an award to an employee and its amount fully depend on employer's decision and are not subject to judicial review. On the other hand, an employee becomes eligible for a premium when conditions stipulated in an organization's internal employment regulations, such as premium regulations, remuneration regulations or collective labour agreement, are met. In practice, eligibility for a premium is usually stipulated in premium regulations. Conditions for eligibility for a premium may also be stipulated in an employment contract.

Examples of awards are as follows:

- financial award
- letter of commendation
- public commendation
- diploma of commendation
- other awards.

Polish labour code includes only general statements referring to the process of awarding employees. The code may imply criteria for awarding an employee that should be considered and that an employer is obliged to enclose award notice within the employee's

Personnel Records.

Therefore, the labour code purposefully states only general conditions for awarding employees, leaving the final decision to the employer.

However, the employer's free decision should be based on suggestions stated in the labour code, hence the employer should consider primarily:

- conscientiousness in performing one's duties,
- showing initiative at work,
- increasing efficiency and quality of performance.

Thus the employer sets precise rules for awarding employees, basing them on suggestions stated in the labour code.

When preparing a catalogue of awards, the employer should consider primarily the profile of the organization, character of work, employees' mental and physical attributes and their positions. Not every award is adequate to a character of work, an employee's performance, a particular position or an employee's health.

Model award regulations may include the following rules (regulation issued by Limanowa Commune Administrator) [4]:

- As part of remuneration funds, an award fund is for created employees of Commune Office to award employees for special achievement.
- The amount of funds allotted for the award fund is determined by Office's yearly financial plan but it must be equal to at least 3% of remuneration funds.
- This regulation does not concern the Commune Administrator.
- This regulation will be executed by Human Resources and OHS Specialist.
- An employee may be awarded for excellent performance that significantly contributed to achieving Office's mission.
- the Commune Administrator will base his or her decision to award an employee on at least one of the following criteria:
 - conscientiousness in performing one's duties, both those related to one's job description and duties to execute Commune Administrator's orders (including full availability to work flexible hours when executing Commune Administrator's orders);
 - employee's proper performance in the situation of increased responsibilities

- (including substituting for an absent colleague);
- showing initiative at work, including initiating new organizational and technical solutions beneficial for the Office;
- increasing efficiency and quality of performance;
- showing initiative to acquire funds for the Office or successful economizing in managing funds due to streamlined task performance;
- compliance with disciplinary rules;
- participation in community service benefiting the Office or the Commune;
- building the Office's and the Commune's good reputation.
- Award is discretionary and it may be issued to an employee at any time.
- Discretionary character of the award means that employees may not submit a claim for award and that recipients, amount and payment date are chosen by Commune Administrator alone.
- Commune Administrator issues award on his or her own initiative or following a request filed by an employee's superior or Human Resources and OHS Specialist.
- Commune Administrator informs recipient about award and its amount in writing.
- Copy of award notice is enclosed within employee's Personnel Records.
- This regulation will be published on the notice board of the Commune Office.

7. THE ROLE OF SETTING GOALS IN MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES

Setting goals has beneficial influence on employees' motivation to work and employee engagement. It is due to the fact that a clear prospect Achieving a complex goal brings personal satisfaction to an employee and advantage to an organization.

The following rules for setting goals for employees may be pointed out [7, 8]:

- goals must be in agreement with department goals, must support work of and employee's superior and be interconnected with goals set for other employees of the department. They must also result directly from strategic goals of the organization,

- goals must be very specific and stated clearly so as to avoid confusion or misinterpretation. Each goal should cover one theme. Goals should not, however, be defined too concisely. A precisely defined goal allows an employee to remember where he or she is heading during the time between appraisals,
- when setting goals, it is important to consider an employee's capabilities, level of his or her competence, motivation and his or her recent performance. Setting high standards is a necessary condition for professional development, however, standards must not be impossible to meet. Goals must therefore be challenging and, at the same time, commensurate with talents and capabilities of an employee. Setting goals which are too difficult to achieve is demotivating as it causes frustration that leads the employee to renounce the goal,
- goals must be individual, that is, separate goals must be defined for each employee. If the same goals are set for all the department employees, they have not been defined properly. The sum of individual employees' performances results in the achievement of an organizational unit's common goal. Setting identical goals for all employees suggests that employees have the same strong and weak points, identical performance style and the same responsibilities, which of course is not the case,
- if properly defined development goals, such as an increase in knowledge, abilities and experience, result from employee's conscious needs, his or her engagement and efficiency will be twice as large.

8. WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Another vital motivating factor is ability and possibility to achieve work-life balance.

Observation of employees' behaviour, regardless of their line of work and position, leads to the conclusion that nowadays people rarely manage to achieve life-work balance. Not being conscious of it is a further problem.

Work-life balance programs may use different instruments in different

configurations, depending on the needs and opportunities of an organization and the needs of employees, for example [9]:

- different types of employment contracts,
- working hours,
- work security,
- training offered by employer and development prospects,
- status of work, scope of own initiative, content of work,
- equal opportunities regardless of work mode,
- OHS,
- help with childcare,
- help with care of the elderly,
- help to overcome stress and other mental obstacles,
- pre-layoff services and pre-retirement transition services,
- additional leave,
- shaping organizational culture,
- counseling,
- training/counseling for parents,
- participation and social dialogue, e.g. proprietary participation (shares, stock options, etc.), especially in the case of management, financial participation, decisive participation,
- pension plans,
- cultural and recreational benefits.

Care of the self is closely connected with the need of positive self-esteem, therefore low self-esteem is a serious obstacle in implementing work-life balance programs.

People suffering from low self-esteem are overly focused on their weaknesses and failures, feel that they do not deserve success and are likely to ignore their own needs.

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9. CONCLUSION

Motivating employees is a multi-layered issue. The fast-growing managerial psychology seems to be offering promising solutions to various challenges connected with fostering employee motivation.

In public administration, it is very difficult to find internal records that would prove that an office has a written motivation system.

If an organization's unit managers claim that a motivation system exists in their office, it is, however, difficult for the employees to define components of the system, to describe how their needs are considered within the system and what tools are used in practice.

Author's further research will focus on an effort to construct instruments for evaluating efficiency of existing motivational systems and for evaluating rules according to which a new model of a system, commensurate with character of work in different types of social organizations, may be constructed.

It is worth to research anew and further research remuneration systems in commune offices, especially due to numerous changes in law that have been made in the past few years. Measures must be taken to limit negative effects of lack of life-work balance. Managers must recognize the vital role of life-work balance as it has been negatively affected by modern technological changes. New rules of conduct for managers must be therefore constructed.

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