

THE MARKETING MANAGERS

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Theoretically, the human resources management can be thought of as a plurality of scientific elements meant to express the characteristics and dynamics of an organization through its human resources, to provide managers with an important source of information, needed to optimize the decision-making process, and to offer optimal personnel selection, recruitment and administration. Taking control of the entire manufacturing process depends mainly on how much managers know the characteristics of the human resources they lead. Raising awareness on the objective differences between people, the opinion diversity, the situation-related behavioral changes, and the psycho-social features of the staff represents a basic requirement to ensure a performant management.

At the same time, the human resources management can also be applied to managers, as an essential component of the organizational system, defining and studying the behavioral characteristics of the managers, their management styles, enlarging the study field to the managerial career planning. Also, the concept of *manager efficiency* was defined and analysed using the main features of the human resources management. The study of the managerial career starts with outlining the company needs related to the managerial position, and continues with analyzing the required abilities to fill this position, followed by the recruitment, selection, training, professional and managerial improvement of the successful candidate.

In terms of profession, the managerial career presents some specific features that distinguish it from other jobs. Therefore, a manager is mostly influenced by the political and economic evolution of the society. Another characteristic refers to the way a manager fills that position (while all the other jobs are a matter of personal choice, a manager's career is built using a specialized mechanism of recruitment, selection, training and promotion). The duration of the managerial career is of the same importance, as while few cases can be mentioned of managerial positions expanding on the entire career of a manager, this situation is common with other jobs.

Focusing on marketing, the role of the people working in this department is ever more important. Thus, the current changes in the marketing field have determined many companies to introduce or reconsider the position of *brand manager*. This is due to the customers' behaviour, who being offered a large diversity of products and brands, make a choice depending on the price and not on a certain brand. Therefore, companies focus on promotional campaigns at the place of sale (aiming at practising the lowest possible prices), to the detriment of large-scale advertising. That is why the function of the brand managers is more and more essential, as they are forced to focus more on finding strategies for short-term increase of the sales figure, strategies that are typical of the local markets.

The importance of the brand manager is getting even higher due to the pressure exercised by retailers, which are larger, stronger and better-informed. They make demands and even obtain from suppliers promotion facilities in exchange of an outlet. For companies, it involves an increase of the expenses for promotions at the place of sale, and the corresponding decrease of the national advertising. These are only two arguments which stimulated the revitalizing of his position or even the creation of brand manger

positions. He is in charge of promoting a certain brand in the area, finding new brand strategies based on specific local elements, and has a close cooperation with the field sales agents, who connects them directly with his customers.

In large companies, with various brands and products, to avoid a surplus of brand managers, it was created the position of sub-department manager, who heads a department team. The team is made up of several marketing specialists, a sale expert and one specialized in marketing information. This team also cooperates with employees from other departments like: finance-accounts, research-development, production and distribution. The team manager leads a small organization, being responsible for all its performances.

A current trend is to choose *public relations managers* instead of the traditional *sales managers*. They are in charge of improving the relations with their clients in a more direct way. This entails better sale coordination, a better supervision of any transaction, a closer relation with the customers, and highly efficient marketing campaigns.

The qualities of a manager

The qualities required to fill a position of manager are categorized in several groups, as follows: physical qualities, personality traits, professional qualities and last but not least, the strong personal motivation to apply for this job.

The *physical qualities* required by a manager refer mainly to the good physical and mental health condition needed by a manager position, which involves unusual working power under stress.

The second category of qualities implies the *personality traits* of the manager. The human personality encompasses three essential elements: temperament, character and aptitudes. On its turn, the character includes a person's attitudes, flexibility and behaviour.

The temperament is the personality trait which involves energy, quickness, steadiness and intensity of the mental processes and which, according to Hippocrates, can be explained by the mixture of the four basic humors of the human body: blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile. Of all these, only one is predominant in the human body. Corresponding to these fluids, four types of temperaments can be distinguished: sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic and choleric.

Regarding the attitudes, they can be defined as a particular gesture, reaction, approach to a subject, theme, idea, etc. The manager's attitude is of the utmost importance, as it determines his behaviour, essential element for a managerial position. Regardless of his field of activity, the manager's behaviour is based on certain practical basic rules such as: knowing and appreciating his subordinates, imposing discipline, getting the respect and confidence of his subordinates, superiors and partners, as well as qualities like determination, vitality and integrity.

Other important qualities of a manager are flexibility and adaptability to his partners' behaviour. From a behavioural perspective, the reference bibliography divides managers in two types: *charismatic managers* and *uncharismatic managers*. The *charismatic manager* is an extension of an approach to management based on the specific qualities of a manager. He is a person who has a great impact on his subordinates, using his personal abilities and style. He is also very self-confident, strongly believing that moral integrity improves charisma and thus, managerial efficiency. The *uncharismatic manager* is weakly motivated and leads his employees according to the existent rules; his personal power and that of his current position are the result of different rewards and work experience.

Aptitudes are the third component of the human personality, representing the specific features of a person and ensuring the best achievement of a certain kind of

activity. The most important managerial aptitudes are: intelligence, creativity, spirits of observation, attention, organizing and leadership aptitudes, the ability to select useful information, to set priorities, to communicate, to reveal the essence of things beyond their visual unfolding, the capacity to analyse managerial processes, to actively take part in decision-making, etc...

Apart from his personal innate qualities, the *professional qualities* of a manager are of the same importance. These are put into practice through the theoretical and practical knowledge that he requires in order to cope with the various problems involved in the activity that he leads. His professional qualities must be backed by expertise and general-interest knowledge (cultural knowledge, as well as mathematics, psycho-sociology, law, sciences, statistics, etc.), along with a large managerial training.

The adequate proportion between these three elements is hard to determine, as it depends on the managerial position in the company hierarchy – the higher the managerial position, the larger the general and management knowledge, to the disadvantage of the expertise. In turn, expertise is the key word with lower-level management.

Regarding the academic education of the managers, especially of those filling top management positions, many surveys have shown that most countries prefer engineers. But, in practice, economics graduates are preferred to fill managerial positions, especially in large companies. This choice is motivated by the companies' economic objectives, the economic character of most means needed to achieve these objectives, better abilities in decision-making, and a higher propensity for the humane aspects of management. Usually, a combined version of the above-mentioned elements is preferred, namely engineers who subsequently improve their education attending "business schools".

Opinions differ in this respect, like in any other issue, in fact. Some specialists believe that the issue of the manager's academic studies is false, because the candidate must be evaluated according to the degree of correspondence between him and the job requirements, and not according to his education. At the same time, it is a common opinion to consider that top management employees should have first of all good management expertise, and only secondly should they make good engineers or economists. Also, it is absolutely necessary to take into account the personal qualities, motivations, visionary abilities, fast decision-making capabilities, the courage to take responsibility, etc..., expressed by the catchall term of *managerial expertise*.

Being employed or promoted to such a position requires a strong motivation with beneficial influence on the further activities of the manager. After the assessment of the other three categories of qualities required by a manager, the degree of motivation in filling this position comes to support the belief about the candidate's striving to make an efficient manager, the motivation being an additional positive argument. The reference bibliography in this field enumerates different possible motivations in choosing this position: need for power, need for high social status, improvement of the economic situation, improvement of the personal and professional qualities, desire to implement personal ideas, desire to escape routine, to experience team work, etc.

As far as the marketing managers are concerned, they need to be first of all good marketing professionals and to have imagination, talent, very good communication skills, etc. They must also be innovative, visionary about the way a product or brand should be developed, along with a series of qualities for the best perception of the consumer and his needs. Nevertheless, all these features are emphasized depending on the type of marketing manager and the way the company organizes its overall activity.

The managers` efficiency

In some reference books, the manager's efficiency gets the same importance as the efficiency of the management style. The term "*efficiency*" derives from the Latin word "*efficere*", which means "effect". Efficiency is a human attribute and because all employees have a well-determined role within the company, each of them – from the lowest position to top management – can be more or less efficient.

In one of his books, Peter Drucker considered that efficiency is a habit which involves a mixture of practices that can be learned. Thus, Drucker presents five such practices:

- a) efficient managers always know how much time they have;
- b) efficient managers focus on external contribution, aiming more at final results than at the work itself;
- c) efficient managers rely on their strengths, as well as on those of their superiors, subordinates, partners, and on the main elements of the established action plan, in other words, on the everything they can do quickly and efficiently;
- d) efficient managers strive to set priorities and respect them, being aware of their importance;
- e) efficient managers make the most efficient and well-motivated decisions.

A manager's efficiency is the result of his way of thinking and acting, and depends on several factors, such as:

- personality;
- degree of motivation for his actions;
- behaviour;
- initiative and creativity;
- ability to know his business partners;
- receptivity to the problems of his company, subordinates and toward change;
- good communication skills and in working with the public;
- capacity to organize work and assign tasks;
- willingness to work in a team;
- decision-making capacity, etc.

We should also mention that the managers` efficiency has a direct impact on social efficiency, being one of its basic elements. Social efficiency implies aspects which are directly uncountable but have multiple consequences on all the factors involved in an organization, and thus on the human factor. In this respect, the manager's efficiency depends on the importance he pays to his subordinates, on the good understanding of his motivations, on creating favourable conditions for staff training and improvement.

Consequently, the relation efficacy-efficiency is similar to that between "part-whole", considering that efficacy is an attribute of the human resources, who are an important component of any organization's resources.

Concerning the marketing managers, their efficiency is considered arbitrary, being supported by the idea that the marketing department is in charge only with sales. That is why many general managers are stressed by the high sale and advertising costs, by the constant or descendent market value of their company, and by the decrease of the company turnover. The people held responsible for all these problems are the marketing managers. Therefore, it has been found that marketing managers do not fill this position more than 16-18 months, considering that the effects of their job can only be seen after longer periods of time.

Some research on this subject has shown that general or executive managers believe that the marketing managers lack focusing power and imagination, are too

protected, uncreative, come up with few ideas, and sometimes they cannot even control the current economic facts and realities.

There may be marketing managers with such qualities in certain companies, but on the other hand, many times there is little information at top management level about the duties of the marketing department. Due to this, many executives assign unreasonable or unrealistic tasks to their marketing managers.

This completely wrong attitude is also supported by the idea of the top management staff that marketing is just a department, a subordinated structure within their company. But a company's market value could drop severely even with a performant marketing department. This can be explained by the fact that if a company's departments are not customer-oriented, that company has smaller chances to resist on the current market. Philip Kotler's statement is very relevant in this respect: "*The forward-thinking companies seek to have all departments focused on customers, and even lead them according to their customers' needs*".

As to conclude, the marketing managers' role within a company is important but more essential is the marketing strategy they have adopted. They should be driven by a customer-oriented strategy at all company levels. This orientation should be the milestone of a company's overall activity and organizational culture.

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