Preface

The current times reflect the beginnings of a paradigm shift to a global economy in which the presence of the Internet is nothing short of pervasive. Businesses all around the world face major challenges related to the progressive (and many times unavoidable) incorporation of Information Technologies into their processes, using different tools and solutions. However, many organizations do not react to these environmental exigencies suitably. This problem often results in policies, practices, and strategies that are outdated. Furthermore, the profile of the employees has changed lately. Businesses have to consider their modern knowledge workers a set of competences rather than merely "people." Today's competency models assist in developing abilities like adaptability, learning, and knowledge creation and sharing. Since these models consider both subjective and objective skills together, they offer a much wider and more complex vision of a company's personnel. Managing by competencies leads to excellence in work performance, and increases the inimitability and uniqueness of the organization's human resources, enhancing their value as source of sustainable advantage. Therefore, competency based E-human resource practices can become the leverage that many companies need to survive and succeed without resorting to hard, cost-cutting based measures.

This book is a reference for both practitioners and academics for designing and implementing e-Management and competency models in companies. The publication's purpose is to show future Human Resource practitioners how to boost the added value of people as a company asset by means of an adequate strategy. It presents the impacts of integrated e-human resource policies, and provides some recommendations for addressing the shift from traditional Human Resource policies to a new economy perspective.

OVERVIEW

Chapter 1, "*Toward a Unifying Framework for Defining Internal Human Resource Flexibility: A Proposal Based on the Resource-Based View Approach*" by Inmaculada Beltrán Martín, Universitat Jaume I, Spain, discusses how a flexible workforce is emerging as a critical success factor to counteract certain organizational rigidities and to guarantee organizational competitiveness in challenging environments. This chapter provides a review of the relevant definitions and classifications of human resource (HR) flexibility that have appeared during recent years. Furthermore, the chapter presents a definition of internal HR flexibility based on the resource-based view approach. From this perspective, HR flexibility is defined as a multidimensional concept. Specifically, this chapter assumes that employees are flexible when they show intrinsic flexibility (i.e. they can easily move between tasks and roles), modification

flexibility (i.e. they alter their skills and/or behaviors to adapt to new circumstances), and relational flexibility (i.e. they participate in collaborative activities).

Chapter 2, "*Outsourcing the HR Function in the new Economy: Literature, Facts and Research Agenda*" by Mireia Valverde, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Spain, Sergi Romeu, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Spain, and José Luís Gascó, University of Alicante, Spain, presents solutions for organisations searching for more flexibility in their quest towards competitiveness. One of the avenues towards flexibility is the outsourcing of some business processes, whether it is to achieve cost cutting or acquire expertise from external organisations. The HR function or some of its components have also been subjected to outsourcing for some time. However, the decision of what to outsource, how, when, and to whom in HR is not exempt from risks. This chapter reviews the existing literature on outsourcing the HR function that has addressed these questions and generates and agenda for research in order to orient researchers' efforts to reach more conclusive evidence about the practice of HR outsourcing.

Chapter 3, "*Talent Management: A New Perspective in Human Resource Management*," by Roberto Luna-Arocas, University of Valencia, Spain, underlines the powerful perspective of talent management, integrating practices from organizations and providing a scientific approach. Some previous results from different research are expressed in relation to strategy and organizational performance. Talent Management is clearly a related concept to high performance work system, with the difference being a more strategic approach. More than practices are goals for the organization to achieve excellence at work. So Talent Management is clearly linked with a strategic approach to the organization in order to attract, develop, evaluate, and retain professionals with high capacities.

Chapter 4, "*Ethics and Learning Organizations in the new Economy*," by Alexis Bañón, Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain, Manuel Guillén, University of Valencia, Spain, and Ignacio Gil, Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain, studies ethics and learning in the context of the new economy. Business organizations need to learn faster, and to maintain and to improve knowledge, producing creative solutions based on their knowledge, skills, and new technologies to develop a customer responsive culture in a more economic and efficient way. In order to achieve this, CEOs and Human Resource (HR) policies should potentially contribute to knowledge development by creating authentic learning organizations. The authors propose in this study that learning improvements in organizations are not just a matter of techniques or aptitudes, but also a matter of feelings, attitudes, and, above all, of the moral habits of their members. The authors strongly suggest complementing currently established conceptions of knowledge management and organizational learning through an explicit inclusion of ethics and ethical learning in organizations.

Chapter 5, "*E-Recruitment: The Move towards a Virtually Organized Recruitment Process*," by Anna B. Holm, Aarhus University, Denmark, explores E-recruitment, also known as online or Web-based recruitment, which is rarely discussed in research from an organizational perspective. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to analyze and discuss the process of e-recruitment, its key constituents, and organizing principles, based on the results of a qualitative study conducted in 2008-2009, together with data from industrial reports, articles from practitioner magazines, and in-depth interviews. The chapter provides a summary of e-recruitment properties and a composite matrix of the overall elements of e-recruitment organizing. E-recruitment is viewed as a case of virtual organizing, i.e. the organization of processes and activities, which, via technology and human agents, facilitate time- and space-independent interaction and collaboration. The chapter closes with a brief discussion of implications for HR managers and professionals and avenues for future research.

Chapter 6, "*The Importance of Psychological Contract in Human Resource Management within the new Global Economy*," by Inocencia Mª Martínez-León, Technical University of Cartagena, Spain, highlights HR's role in the psychological contract between a company and its employees, beyond the written contract, specifying their contributions, expectations, beliefs, promises, and obligations between both parties. Their management requires the definition of the concept of psychological contract, the analysis of its main characteristics and contents, and the identification of its stages of development. Electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM) introduces a way of implementing HRM strategies through Web-based tools, improving the psychological contract management. Information phase, Intranet, and internal electronic mail have an important role in socialization stage. The consolidation of psychological contract (maintenance phase) is favoured by Intranet, business-to-employees, internal electronic mail, database, videoconference, and groupware. Finally, in breach phase, intranet, electronic mail, database, videoconference, and groupware are important E-HRM.

Chapter 7, "*Strategic and Organizational Considerations Related to an E-Learning Model: A Case of Study*," by Nuria Calvo, University of A Coruña, Spain, and Paolo Rungo, University of A Coruña, Spain, aims to assess the impact of different organizational factors on the success of e-learning programs, in terms of both self-reported satisfaction and the level of learning. Hence, this study adds to the analysis of the efficacy of e-learning models from an organizational perspective by providing some useful insights, which may help to improve decision-making related to employee's continuing education and satisfaction. This simulation, using a bivariate ordered probit model, shows that economic and indirect economic incentives play a key role in augmenting the level of both satisfaction and learning. This analysis also considers how efficacy of learning programs may thus improve by linking the human resources development policy with results obtained in e-learning courses.

Chapter 8, "*Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Analysis of Their Relationship in Private Teachers*," by Sandra Mª Sánchez Cañizares, University of Córdoba, Spain, and Fernando J. Fuentes García, University of Córdoba, Spain, offers a model for understanding the effect of employee's perceptions on an organization. People are an essential source for the competitiveness of organizations. Numerous authors have recognized the importance of organizational commitment and job satisfaction as key attitudes related with work, influencing aspects like rotation, absenteeism, or productivity. However, a clearly delimited posture on the relationship between both constructs does not exist. It is because of this that the present work theoretically analyses several models regarding this matter. Subsequently, a proposed model is estimated and validated using the methodology of structural equations modeling (SEM). This model confirms the influence of job satisfaction over organizational commitment and its moderating effect on the influence on the latter of various perceptual factors of the employee related to his/her work.

The economic situation in the last few years has forced companies to adjust their workforces and reduce hierarchical levels. They have also had to undertake overhead cost and expense adjustment programmes, including salary freeze and the reduction of training budgets, amongst others; all of it is within an environment where human capital has acquired special relevance. It has been shown that individuals represent enterprises' main asset, the element that can generate sustainable competitive advantages over time. Power has changed hands; it no longer lies in the traditional means of production, but in knowledge. And knowledge resides in people. Knowledge and people are the new engines of economy. The management of individuals, which is nothing but the management of their intangibles and the need to attract and retain talent, becomes especially important in this context. Commitment management is one of the

most effective policies to achieve this aim. Managers must implement policies to commit employees to not only retain them, but also encourage them to do their best. The best tool to achieve this necessary commitment is internal communication. Chapter 9, "*The Role of Internal Communication in Commitment Management*," José Antonio Carazo, Capital Humano, Spain, aims to offer a conceptual reflection on commitment management and analyses the state of internal communication in Spanish companies. The purpose is to establish a link between the emphasis placed by companies on achieving their employees' commitment and internal communication as a tool that can help to reach that goal.

Chapter 10, "*Staff Restructuring in the New Economy*," José Antonio Fernández Sánchez, University of Alicante, Spain, and Encarnación Manresa Marhuenda, University of Alicante, Spain, tackles an important HR concern. In times of recession, survival for most businesses means to do more with fewer resources. It is necessary to encourage policies that will help a company to become more efficient, like staff restructuring. This policy encompasses many decisions, from laying people off to relocating employees to other positions as a consequence of the deployment of a more rational structure, which in turn answers to a change in strategy caused by the turn in the environment. This chapter explains the concept of staff restructuring in detail and offers several methods to carry it out. Afterwards, the potential problems that may arise from implementing this strategy are discussed, and, finally, some clues on how to avoid such problems, or, at least, mitigate their consequences, are presented. It is also made clear that a short-term approach in this regard will lead to a future lack of competitiveness, and therefore, endanger long-term survival.

Chapter 11, "*The Competency-Based Human Resource Management Model*," by Jorge Valdés Conca and Susana de Juana-Espinosa, University of Alicante, Spain, starts with a detailed description of the basic analysis unit in the human resource management model that constitutes the study object of this chapter: competency. With this aim in mind, the first section in this chapter is dedicated to three tasks the authors consider basic and introductory: (a) defining the concept of competency through the different approaches made by some of the most outstanding authors in this field; (b) dissecting that concept in its various elements or components so that it can be better interpreted; and finally (c) presenting a number of classifications thanks to which the treatment of certain competencies can be prioritised.

Chapter 12, "*Competencies 2.0: A Theoretical Model for Defining and Managing a Presence Plan on the Web*," by Jaime Izquierdo-Pereira, NewMahwah - The Social Xperts Lab, Spain, Carmen Avilés-Palacios, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain, Joaquín García-Alfonso, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain, and Manuel López-Quero, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain, presents a theoretical model for defining and managing a presence plan on the Web, emphasizing in those individual Competencies 2.0. It is defined from a Delphi method, involving experts in the use and development of Web 2.0. The strengths of this model are two: 1) It is a model that attempts to explain new tasks resulting from magazines not covered in sufficient depth from an academic and scientific perspective, though they have been studied and discussed in forums 2.0; and 2) It explains the relationship between individual and organizational competencies 2.0, so that the first one can act on to modify the latter. On the other hand, this chapter has certain shortcomings, mainly two: 1) It has not been empirically validated, although research is underway to rectify this deficiency, and 2) There is not enough academic scientific knowledge, probably due to the novelty of this issue.

In Chapter 13, "*Competence-Based Profile to Characterize Successful Entrepreneurs*," by Lourdes Canós-Darós and Cristina Santandreu-Mascarell, Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain, the authors list different points of view about entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs. For this, they take into account the

relationship between an entrepreneur and his or her environment. Thus, the chapter identifies the main competences that characterize an entrepreneur distinguishing between innate and/or learned competencies.

Chapter 14, "*Cross-Cultural Competences in the New Economy*," by Irene Martin-Rubio, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain, and Drew Rodgers and Erik Døving, Oslo University College, Norway, explores cross-cultural knowledge management in the e-environment results from interactions with others from different cultures that require new understanding and interpretations. The authors find that few studies have been conducted to address the objective of identifying the competences that are needed to promote learning and information processing in the 21st century. The authors' primary goal is to identify competences that will promote learning and information processing in global organizations. The chapter outlines a taxonomy of competences necessary for cross-cultural learning in the global e-environment based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory.

Chapter 15, "*Leadership Talent Development in the New Economy*," by José Manuel de Haro, AGBAR Group, Spain and José Antonio Carrión, Opem Consultants, Spain analyzes how it is possible to achieve the best results in the task of developing leaders. For this purpose, they first present, as a starting point, a framework based on strategic principles for managerial development that have to be assumed before taking action and, after which, they propose the operational means that allow them to go beyond what has so far constituted the content of the organizational practices in this field. Intentions are as follows: reducing the level of complexity perceived about the concept itself and about its tools; including the most relevant managerial development contents; presenting an orderly, consistent process, which can guide future interventions in this field. At present, and even though the authors think that the contribution made in this chapter will help introduce significant improvements in managerial development practices, there are still quite a few pending issues that will gradually have to be solved in order to make progress.

Chapter 16, "*Management and Leadership of Innovative Work Teams*," by Santiago Gutiérrez, Castilla-La Mancha University, Spain, focuses on the analysis of two factors; the characteristics of new work teams and the management and leadership tools required for these innovative teams, in order to generate greater effectiveness. Firstly, the authors present the differences between a work team and a group and the basic characteristics of innovative work teams (multifunctional teams, self-managing teams, virtual teams, and open-innovation teams). Then, the authors focus on the management systems of these teams with the aim of generating greater effectiveness. High-performance practices and management skills are presented as tools for increasing motivation and commitment to the company and its business culture. Finally, the authors analyzed the leadership and the effect of leadership has an impact on the team's results as well as on the company's innovativeness, making it an essential part of creating effective innovative teams.

For Javier Pagán Castaño, Portsmouth University, UK, and Dolores Garzón Benítez, Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain, the authors of Chapter 17, "*Listening and Leadership*," this era is both characterized by continually evolving and changing market conditions and the relevance of knowledge to adapt to the new environment. In this chapter, the authors focus on three ideas: the connection between the company results and the leader's listening skills; people as the firm's most valuable resource; and therefore, internal communication as the key for success and full potential of the company. However, the chapter concludes that internal communication is scarce and not always effective since one way communication seems to be the most common form of interaction, even though leaders know the importance and value of their human resources.

The main goal of Chapter 18, "*Analysis of Gender Equality in Higher Management Levels: A Study Model*," by Nuria Calvo, University of A Coruña, Spain, María Bastida, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, and Jacobo Feás, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, is to undertake a critical analysis of the current situation concerning the equal treatment of female managers in Spain. In this chapter, the authors analysed the dynamics of business behaviour in order to understand why inequality of women managers persists for gender reasons in spite of the anti-discrimination measures recommended by the legislative framework in place. This analysis has allowed proposals for measures to be drawn up to be taken into account in designing human resources strategies, based on systems of management by competencies and assessment of managerial performance.

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