Chapter XVII

The Enrichment of the HR Intranet Linked to the Regulation’s Processes Between HR Actors

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ABSTRACT

The subject of our communication will be a better understanding of how the regulation between the online HR designers and HR experts is built, and to know about the consequences on the HR intranet’s enrichment and the HR reengineering. The author’s communication will articulate in two parts. Firstly, she will come back on the e-HR concept in a way to enrich the definition proposed above by a systematic approach. Secondly, individuals will see how this model, mentioned in all the speeches, meets the logic of the different actors and how the differences between them could be managed; which raises an issue to resolve.

INTRODUCTION

In response to a more competitive environment and stronger requirements from the customers and the shareholders in terms of profitability, reduction of the structural costs, the Human Resources Department has to convince the Board of Management of its capacities of innovation, adaptability and flexibility. For this purpose, the HR Management invests increasingly in a new model of functioning: the e-HR.

According to literature the e-HR, based on a company strategy and linked to the Information and Communication Technology, is a global functioning mode of a company around a significant number of HR processes which leads to the sharing of HR information and its treatment by direct and free access of the employees, the Management and
the HR function and to the setting-up of a new HR organisation in order to optimise the customer relationship. This dynamics leads the HR Management to design its own way of changing by optimising its organisation and by trying to convince the HR actors to adopt this role of strategic business partners, in the scope of which they are supposed to reduce the costs of co-ordination and to favour co-operation between the various groups of actors. Achieving a better distribution of messages and optimising the HR service are the first objectives.

The middle management is one of the privileged customers to satisfy, because its own role within the company also changes. The improvement of HR communication is generally accompanied by the development and the integration of an HR intranet. There are various steps of development of this tool associated to different functionality. Usually this tool, based on the Information Communication Technology\(^1\), is considered as a technical support with which the required performances can be obtained.

However, as useful as this tool might be, it is first of all a person-related instrument which means that its potential efficiency depends on individual strategies and schemes. A good co-operation between HR actors requires daily efforts. The cost of such efforts is difficult to measure. Our assumption is that the level of internal co-operation influences the elaboration of a stimulating contents, leading to the concrete use of this tool for the HR actors as their customers.

The subject of our communication will be a better understanding of how this regulation between the various HR actors is built, and to know about the consequences on the HR intranet’s enrichment. Three parts will be presented. Firstly, we will focus on the e-HR concept in a way to enrich the definition proposed above by a systematic approach. In the second and third parties, we will see how this model, mentioned in all the speeches, meets the logic of the different actors and how the differences between them could be managed. Which raises a issue to resolve.

**FOR AN ENRICHMENT OF THE E-HR CONCEPT**

The evolution of the HR function has been announced in specialised magazines since the end of the 1990s. Some researchers have made aware HR professionals of their difficult position in the company and of the necessity to transform the function (Ulrich, 1997). Thus, the HR department must show its added business value. To do so, certain guidelines must be followed: become more service-oriented, more focused on its clients, being aware of HR commitment and contribution towards the company performance (Lepark & Snell, 1998 ; Ulrich 1999 ; Wright 1998 ; Rüel, Bondarouk & Looise, 2004). In this context, the support of Information Communication Technology (ICT) is considered to be essential—which leads us to the e-HR concept.

**A Brief Story About the E-HR Concept**

Different models of this concept exist, but many of them are influenced by a technological determinism. According to us, e-HR is more than a concept. It is a new way of thinking the company and its actors. This is why it seems important to schematise it differently by articulating the evolution of actors of the company in various stages of development of an HR intranet. It is our proposal to exceed the risk of the technological and organisational determinisms and provide us with a more systematic approach.

**E-HR as a Basic Element of a New Model of Functioning**

Regarding the definition of e-HR, we have been influenced by the thinking of Huub Rüel and his colleagues. According to them, the e-component is not only the symbol of a technical advance, but the imprint of a deeper transformation of the