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The importance of knowledge transfer management in Romanian companies during COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract. *The sharp spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe, implicitly in Romania, and the increasingly stringent measures taken by the authorities to prevent harmful effects on citizens and the economy raise many questions about the actions that should be taken by companies to ensure compliance. and especially those responsible for taking such measures. Many companies in Romania have already voluntarily taken a precautionary stance against the threat of COVID-19, whether it is the complete interruption, for an indefinite period of time, of the activity, the change of the way of carrying out the activity (exclusively online) or continue to work with increased precautionary measures to reduce the risks.*
In an environment where the legislative framework changes every day, with sometimes vague wording, explainable in terms of the speed with which they are adopted, but in areas extremely important and vulnerable to the business environment, such as social protection, banning activities or continuing in a significantly modified form, the provision of measures with an impact on business partners, the knowledge management is called upon to make quick and high-impact decisions. In all the cases mentioned above, the company behaves according to and based on the decisions taken by the management, an aspect that involves high risks for the latter in terms of liability.

Keywords: knowledge transfer, knowledge management, organizational performance, COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

The management of a company must ensure that the company complies with all obligations under the law and carries out the measures required by the authorities by taking appropriate and effective action in this regard.

Moreover, in view of its obligations of diligence and protection of the company's interests, in relation to the concrete situation, the management has the obligation to assess whether it is necessary to follow the recommendations of the authorities and, if necessary, take the necessary measures to implement them. Failure to adopt or improperly implement such measures may result in liability on the part of both the company and the personal liability of the members of the management for the damage caused. To the extent that the management does not comply with the obligations or measures imposed by law or by the state authorities, it risks, in certain circumstances, including criminal liability. One such example is when management decides to continue economic activities prohibited by special laws, such as the recent military ordinance on some emergency measures concerning crowds and the cross-border movement of goods in which between the time of entry into force and the decision to continue certain types of economic activities only a few hours were available for the governing bodies to decide whether to continue, restrict, modify or cease their activity.

It is important to emphasize that, by virtue of the obligation to supervise the activity of the company and of the persons to whom the management delegates various attributions, the responsibility of the management for possible damages will not be excluded by the simple delegation of attributions and appointment of persons or teams. performing certain tasks. Thus, a

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cautious and informed position, doubled by the adoption by the management of concrete measures and able to ensure results and the allocation of some people or teams for their implementation could have an important weight in a possible action in attracting responsibility.

Given the volatility that characterizes the situation of COVID-19, both locally and in Europe and globally, it is vital to keep informed and monitor the evolution of the pandemic and the measures imposed by the authorities, as well as the indications provided by them. The verification of official information channels should be done regularly, whenever the situation requires it, and the fast and efficient communication with the key personnel with attributions in this respect is an indispensable necessity.

Thus, a first step that management should take is to be regularly informed, in a proactive manner and from verified sources, of any legislative changes, measures taken, or instructions given by the authorities to ensure that take all necessary action and that the company's internal policies are up to date and fully reflect the applicable obligations.

Management should further review current regulations/plans/policies (or draw them up, if any) in the light of new events and update them to reflect current social needs, while ensuring the safety of employees and employees meeting urgent needs at the societal level. The measures taken should cover, in general, the preparation and prevention, the management of the effects already produced and the reduction of the effects of COVID-19 and could consist of:

- identifying and consulting official sources of information on a regular basis;
- designating dedicated people or teams to be responsible for implementing the new rules, monitoring the legislative flow and constantly communicating with the authorities, updating policies whenever necessary and ensuring compliance as far as possible;
- establishing an action protocol in case management, key people in the company or a large part of the staff would be unavailable to perform their tasks;
- ensuring efficient communication channels inside the organization, but also outside for optimal management of the impact on operational activity;
- the organization of the workforce in an efficient manner in relation to the actual workload and to the concrete obligations of the company, in the light of the contractual commitments with the clients, in progress;
- designating a team to handle IT disruptions or potential malware threats;
- establishing an action protocol in case one of the employees or collaborators suspected or tested positive for COVID-19 or had the obligation to self-isolate or quarantine;
- consultation with professionals in the field (tax consultants, risk consultants, lawyers) on specific issues that cannot be managed internally or on which a specialist needs to be consulted to ensure that the approach is appropriate;
- ensuring a hygienic and clean working environment by providing all the necessary products and regular disinfection.

Literature review

The COVID-19 pandemic is the latest in a series of crises that has marked the first two decades of the 21st century.

However, it is different from the others in the real economy rather than in the financial sector. This time, governments have worked hard to minimize the economic impact of restrictions through measures such as monetary policy expansion, temporary debt reduction, specific interventions, expansion of existing programs, wage subsidies and temporary tax exemptions.

In difficult times, many businesses rely on business continuity plans to protect their employees and mitigate the impact of any crisis on business operations[1]. In maintaining business continuity, there are several staffing issues that need to be considered, including cross-border workforce management and employment changes.

The coronavirus pandemic and the resulting economic recession have put undeniable pressure on business owners. Managers need to act urgently and decisively. They need to be prepared and confident, even when the only certainty is uncertainty. Making decisions is often complicated, but of course it is even more difficult when there is no previous experience to rely on.

In times of crisis, the main goal is business continuity and staff safety to be treated as a priority. Once staff security is met, your thoughts should be on cost management to protect your business and keep your jobs in the future, in times of economic hardship.[2]

Relationships with employees and respect for their rights are equally important in maintaining trust and business continuity. Continuous communication with employees is essential to your business. Employees may have urgent questions about how they work, and some may express concerns about potential job losses. Be available to all employees, including those with high concerns or situations specific to their individual circumstances, which require understanding and guidance.

Most knowledge management literature deals with the notion of knowledge in general terms and uses it to cover everything a company needs to know in order to carry out its activity. This may involve formal knowledge - tangible, patents, laws, programs and procedures, as well as intangible knowledge such as people's skills and experience. It can also include how the organization works, communicates, analyzes situations, finds new solutions to problems, finds new ways to do business. In addition, it can involve issues of culture, economic and social climate, moral values, and relationships with suppliers and customers.

Knowledge is thus classified into two broad categories:

- explicit knowledge - can be represented for example in books, reports, speeches or other forms of formal or informal communication.
- tacit knowledge - is that knowledge that man is not able to express explicitly and that concerns human behavior.[3]

Knowledge management solutions enable individuals, teams, and communities to achieve much improved performance in the creation, capture, distribution, and exploitation of knowledge. For this, it is necessary to clearly delimit between the concepts of data, information and knowledge. Data is a series of directly observable properties of things. Information is the accumulation of data in a higher level bundle that has meaning and significance. Filtered through a person's perceptions and thoughts (cognition), information stimulates a wide range of actions and activities. Knowledge is extracted from data and built on information.

Knowledge management is a systematic type of management. It is a process of accumulating, using and reusing information, explicit knowledge, experience, and expertise to gain a special business benefit, accomplish a goal, or objective that enhances the profitability and competitiveness of the organization. Quantities of information stored in formats become knowledge

[1] Cooper, K. G., Lynesis, J. M. & Bryant, B. J. (2002). Learning to learn, from past to future. s.l.: International Journal of Project Management.

[2] Zaiț A., (2021) Managementul cunoștințelor – origini și perspective, Revista Management Intercultural, Volum X, Issue 2 (10)

[3] J. Watson, Applying Knowledge Management, Morgan Kaufman Publishers, Elsever Science, San Francisco, 2020

that is distributed to relevant target groups and allows users to solve problems. This process of transforming information into useful knowledge is called the knowledge management cycle.

The assigned work models in the field of knowledge management are multiple but the most relevant 4 models are the "Wiig", "Nonaka and Takeuchi", "Zack" and "Bukowitz and Williams" models. At the level of data or information acquisition, the focal point of the internship is given by the quality and accuracy of the information. This, in the context of the materials that are used and the specifications that are put into play, can be extended to the purpose, width, depth, credibility, accuracy, speed, relevance, cost, exclusivity etc.

In procurement, the guiding principle is that people should be trained to do the right thing for the first time, whatever information they enter into the system to initiate a flow of data that can be analyzed.

After the purchase, the information must be stored, but not in its entirety. First, the information needs to be converted into knowledge packages. This helps to store and access to make it easy in the future. This process of converting information into knowledge packets is called refinement and can be of several types.[4] In its application, depending on the organizational requirements, it can be: physical, logical, cleaning or standardization. At the distribution stage, the different recipients of the information are defined in the way they will receive the information (emails, printed documents, folders, etc.). The timing and frequency with which they will receive the information and even the form and language will need to be specified. The last step is the presentation, where what was previously considered to be just "information" will become "knowledge". The Zack model can be considered one of the best models and covers the entire organization, providing a good perspective on all the elements of a knowledge management model.

All types of knowledge are recognized by this framework which may include databases or information, information technology, communications infrastructure, organizational intelligence, etc. This model proposes 4 stages, namely "get", "use", "learn" and "contribute". These internships are related to the strategic needs of the organization. [5]

The first stage involves searching for or procuring specific information that is needed to make decisions, solve problems, or create new products or services. The second stage indicates the direction of the information that is combined in different ways by individuals or groups to make the information useful, for example for innovation or renovation.[6]

The third stage assumes that whenever knowledge is used in a business environment, regardless of its success or failure, new knowledge is generated. To ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated and to use the new knowledge in order to increase competitive advantage, the integration of this new knowledge back into the system is encouraged. The fourth stage shows that these employee contributions are sought to continuously update the database and knowledge repositories. This is one way of documenting tacit knowledge.

In a society where knowledge is so well recognized and sought after mainly by professionals who want to stand out, it is virtually impossible to try to grow a business without gaining knowledge specific to the field.

Every day, we are overwhelmed by new information that can help us improve some aspects of our lives, both personal and professional. However, there is no point in receiving all these ideas

[4] Davenport, T. H. & Prusak, L. (1998). Working Knowledge – How Organisations Manage What They Know. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

[5] Tuomi, (2021) The Future Management, Life in Learning in Europe, vol. VII, nr. 2

[6] Pănescu D., A., (2021) Sisteme bazate pe cunoștințe, Reprezentarea cunoașterii, Editura Matrix Rom, București

if you do not know how to use them in your favor and, mainly, in favor of your business. Well, that's what Knowledge Management is all about.

In short, knowledge management is a set of processes that aim to find, compare, organize, select and present more clearly the information obtained in a business.

Methodology

To show the importance of knowledge transfer management in Romanian companies during COVID-19 pandemic, I chose to do quantitative research, using the questionnaire.

The analysis based on the knowledge-based economics in Romania was carried out on a sample of 107 companies, as a result of a survey, and they stated that they were based on the management system. Considering the age of the analyzed companies, the largest part of the companies that made the survey was under 5 years old (39.25%), followed by 5 years of age (97%), between 10-15 years (17.75%) and older than 15 years (14.03%).

Results and discussions

Analyzing the branches of activity, the structure of the company is as follows: 19.63% of the companies carry out their activity in the market, 21.98% are from the field of services, 28.04% are in the industry, 4,9% are from transports and 5.61% are in tourism. In the form of reports, all firms have stated that they are using the elements of management based on their knowledge.

This area of service was aimed at identifying the attitudes, goals and general advantages of knowledge-based management in the companies that use it. In the case of employees, we find a situation in the opposite direction, in the sense that only 22.43% of them consider it important and very difficult. Although 28.97% found it irrelevant but found it difficult, 27.1% found it irrelevant and 21.5% did not consider it irrelevant.

Another area of analysis addressed the benefits and advantages of knowledge-based management in investigated firms. From the most important part of the year, the most important thing was the attraction of a socialist in the field (18.69%) and the justification of the limited resources in front of the landlord (15.89%) high level (4.67%).

Table 1. The problems that Romanian managers face with

Crt. Number	Problems facing Romanian managers in using knowledge-based management	Percent (%)
1	Understanding the Knowledge-Based Management and Employee Benefits of Employees	10,28
2	Difficulties in attracting specialists to the domain	18,69
3	High operating costs, especially on the computer side	14,02
4	Loss of knowledge when key employees leave the organization	10,28
5	Reduced knowledge transfer within the organization	12,15
6	Unfavorable organizational culture	8,41
7	Justification for the use of limited resources	15,89
8	Lack of commitment from top management	4,67
9	Attracting and retaining talented people	5,61

Advantageously, the surveyed managers stated that, following the implementation of the knowledge-based management, the firm advantage held by the company improved (18.69%) or increased its revenue by 14% (more than 14) refers to the management of intellectual property rights.

Among the determinants of the introduction of knowledge-based management in affiliated firms, managers have long been determined to increase the firm's efficiency and effectiveness. In this case, the attitude of the manager towards the level of knowledge is based on the knowledge-based management, the respondents stated that in 36.45% of the cases they found it very important.

In the case of employees, we find a situation in the opposite direction, in the sense that only 22.43% of them consider it important and very difficult. 28.97% found it irrelevant but found it difficult, 27.1% found it irrelevant, and 21.5% did not consider it irrelevant.

From the most important point of view, the most important thing was to attract a socialist in the field and to justify the limited resources in front of the leaders.

Managers said that, following the implementation of knowledge-based management, the firm's asset advantage had improved (18,69), while the latter was less likely to gain an advantage.

In the future, managers stated that they would like to see the development of networking and the provision or generation of knowledge (24.30%).

In the case of organizational learning content, it has been reported that this is the most important form of training (30.84%) or the importance of healthy learning. In order to be successful in the company, the managers have been able to make the most of the knowledge of what they know and what they want.

Two-thirds of managers have considered that, even if the company is using knowledge-based management, it is not all about a similar company.

The most widely used are decision-making (33.64%) and information (23.36%) subsystems. Managers pay more attention to tax cuts (52.34%). Among the decision-making trends, the most common was the decision-making information (43.93%). In this case, the information subsystem, Romanian companies, is based on the management based on their knowledge and the use of the Internet.

The main cultural barrier in the use of knowledge-based management, in the opinion of Romanian managers, is the reliance on the sharing of knowledge. Innovative efforts by the investigated firms have led to the emergence of new products / services based on knowledge.

Neo-classical theory considers knowledge to be the most important part of capital, the most powerful "engine" of production. The Austrian school (F. Hayek, J. Schumpeter) considers knowledge to be of a subjective nature, the emphasis being on the individual knowledge of the participants in the economic processes and not on the knowledge held jointly by the different groups within the economic organizations.

As Peter Drucker (1992) points out, contemporary society is defined as a society of knowledge and, at the same time, as a society of organizations. Knowledge-based organizations belong to contemporary reality and mark the convergence between two defining phenomena for human nature - that of knowledge and that of organization, emphasizing collective competence, intelligent action and sustainable performance. In the functioning of such organizations, the determinants are the processes of innovation, continuous learning and the interaction or transfer of assimilated knowledge.

Peter Drucker treated the information-based company as the organizational model of the 21st century and predicted its main features: the professional-dominated component, the low

number of intermediate levels of hierarchical leadership, ensuring coordination through non-authoritarian means (standards, rules, rules of cooperation, etc.).

There is currently a tendency to achieve a synthesis between the various approaches; on economic knowledge, in the form of theories of knowledge-based organizations and knowledge-based society. According to them, knowledge is the main resource of economic organizations and, therefore, knowledge management is of particular importance.

Knowledge management has developed in recent decades as a result of the need for organizations to gain competitive advantage and strategic differentiation in the conditions of globalization and the explosion of information, becoming a valuable tool for ensuring success.[7] Knowledge - the information contained in a set of work practices, "theories in action", skills, activities and processes of the company's employees - are now the "core" of assessing the degree of competence in the globalized information economy.

Conclusion

The knowledge-based SME is the company that incorporates state-of-the-art technology and technology in which a small number of highly trained people usually work, its main resource is knowledge, it is small in terms of the number of employees and the number of businesses, has a competitive advantage based on knowledge, great ability to learn and use new knowledge, generating added value.

Over the last two decades, small and medium-sized enterprises have developed progressively, reaching the point of using and implementing aspects of the knowledge-based economy. SMEs represent the “backbone” of our country's national economy and participate with a large percentage in the constitution of the gross domestic product. Among the determinants in the application of knowledge-based management in companies, the manager highlights the desire to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the company, as well as the transfer of knowledge between employees. In summary, the main features of the knowledge management at the analyzed company include:

- outsources activities that are not essential for the company
- internalizes competitive activities with the object of activity of the company
- turn to specialized companies for less important administrative activities
- maximizes efficiency and effectiveness and is based on team structures
- directing investments in labor training
- rewarding employees based on performance and merits
- use of global, group and personal incentives.

At the same time, it is necessary to train employees to cope with organizational changes, a common element of our days. In order to meet the challenge posed by the multitude of existing psychological and cultural barriers, the recommended type of training would be based on the development of multidisciplinary skills. The acquisition and use of knowledge sometimes needs to be improved, especially in the context of implementing a professional and efficient management.

The enterprise-level knowledge management model provides a coherent approach from the top to the operational level where enterprise-level objectives and strategies are dominant and guide knowledge-based activities starting with knowledge planning and establishing the appropriate infrastructure.

[7] Meir Russ, (2021). Knowledge Management Strategies for Business Development, Business Science Reference, Hersey, New York

The proposed model requires professionals to implement schemes for the representation of specific knowledge in order to create a well-defined and understood environment for the use, implementation and dissemination of knowledge. One of the most important elements of this model is how to handle knowledge and all related activities at the organizational level and to propose a motivated culture based on knowledge. In addition, the importance of the support provided by the leverage of knowledge to achieve the proposed goal must not be neglected: the success of the enterprise.

Knowledge management is a relatively recent phenomenon in its field of application, but it has emerged in the wake of a growing interest in changing the conventional / traditional format of managing its expertise. Many organizations have discovered at the beginning of the last decade that they are no longer able to keep up with the growing complexity of the issues on their business agenda. Managers can no longer simply continue to do what they knew and used to do during rigid production hierarchies, and for what they should do they need access to knowledge but also skills.

The assumption that the post-industrial economic world is information-intensive has become common sense. In a sense, knowledge - information contained in a set of work practices, "theories in action", skills, processes and heuristics of company employees - are now the "core" of assessing the degree of competence in the globalized information economy.

Knowledge management is the acquisition of the right information by the right individuals in a timely manner so that they can make the best decisions.[8]

Knowledge Management can be defined as the identification and analysis of available and necessary knowledge and knowledge-related processes, the planning and subsequent control of actions, to develop both the knowledge and the processes necessary to achieve organizational goals.

This interpretation implies the need for the organization to capture and represent knowledge, to share and reuse knowledge for different applications and different users, which implies that this knowledge is available where it is needed, and to create a culture that encourages sharing and reusing knowledge. In the management of knowledge management, organizational information is operated by people and technological processors (the computer), in order to create valuable products for the organization.

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