IUL School of Social Sciences

Department of Political Economy

e-HRM: Unveiling the hidden dimensions of value creation within Strategic Human Resources Management using Human Resources Information Systems: A case study analysis

Pedro Miguel da Silva Pires

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Acknowledgements

To Professor Nelson Campos Ramalho, for giving me the honor to be mentored by such an experienced professional, inspirational professor, and challenging partner, and to enlighten me in my most confused days on the building process of this thesis;

To my Mother, for being the building stone on which I was able to build myself as an individual, for her altruistic struggle through life that enabled me to be who I am today, for the example of strength and perseverance;

To Carina, the love of my life, the woman who is my safe house trough success and challenges, shortage and abundance. The person who makes me work continuously on becoming the best version of myself. The woman that makes me full of pride to claim my own.

To my brother Renato, my everlasting best friend, no matter what, the person who will always be my mirror and my inspiration.

To Cláudio Andrade, João Amor and Diogo Félix, who walked with me through my teen and adulthood years and was both the friend that all should have and the motivation who driven me to be a better student and a better professional, that guided me through the early challenges of my life;

To all of my co-workers who allowed me to flourish in my professional setting and supported my development;

ABSTRACT

In the age of the digital society, a new paradigm of de-materialization crosses all dimensions of the organizations, and to the activities regarding Human Resources Management, this new digital imperative is no exception.

Despite extensive theory that shows the financial and operational benefits inherent to the implementation of HR Information Systems, this theoretical research is not that much consistent when it comes to finer dimension of analysis.

Starting from a case study approach, within a multinational corporation, operating in Portugal, this study had as its main goal to determine value creation dimensions upon the implementation of HR Information Systems, by crossing both emerging dimensions from existing empirical theory and testing its adherence to what would be reported by the interviewed sample of key stakeholders within the mentioned multinational organization, providing as well a decision model to future implementation projects.

For that, several interviews were conducted with strategic stakeholders in the HR Organization, in the observed organization, and the qualitative data analysis procedures followed.

The results of this analysis allowed to confirm that the key stakeholders adhered to the six main dimensions that were seen as critical to the organizational stakeholders involved in strategic human resources management policies design, and allowed the suggestion as well of a model for strategical orientation built upon the compliance on those very same strategic focus points.

RESUMO

Na era da sociedade digital, um novo paradigma de desmaterialização atravessa todas as dimensões das organizações e para as atividades afetas à Gestão de Recursos Humanos o imperativo digital não é exceção.

Apesar da extensa bibliografia acerca dos benefícios financeiros e operacionais inerentes à implementação de Sistemas de Informação de RH, este levantamento não existe de forma tão consistente em dimensões mais finas de análise.

Partindo de um estudo de caso de uma empresa multinacional a operar em Portugal, este estudo teve como principal objetivo apurar possíveis dimensões de criação de valor aquando da implementação de sistemas de informação de RH, ao cruzar as dimensões emergentes da teoria e testar a sua aderência empírica, providenciando também um modelo de decisão para futuras implementações.

Para isso foram conduzidas entrevistas a *stakeholder*s estratégicos de RH na organização estudada e seguiu-se o posterior tratamento de análise qualitativa de dados.

Os resultados permitiram confirmar a aderência a seis dimensões vistas como mais críticas para os *stakeholders* organizacionais envolvidos no desenho de políticas de gestão estratégica de RH, e sugerir um modelo de orientação estratégica assente na *compliance* com estes mesmos focos.

Palavras-chave: e-GRH, gestão de recursos humanos eletrónica, tecnologias de informação, Gestão estratégica de Recursos Humanos, Sistemas de Informação de Recursos Humanos

Classificação adotada na unidade orgânica: O15 – Human Resources; M15 – IT Management; l86 – Information and Internet Services

INTRODUCTION

"The Last ten years of IT have been about changing the way people work. The next ten years of IT will be about transforming your business."

– Aaron Levie, CEO of Box

Organizations overcame numerous challenges throughout the years, and amongst their new challenges lies the de-materialization and digitalization of many of the dimensions of the human life, from the personal to the economic or social.

The fast pacing paradigm shift that is happening towards a digitalized world seems to show that now, more than ever, the technological development is an important dimension of the very own development of numerous aspects of our social life.

Several examples can be presented to show this: the development of the well-known hospitality service provider Airbnb – that does not own any hotel –, the development of transportation services such as those Uber enables, and the new music paradigm introduced by Spotify and similar services like Apple Music – where digital sales first overcame the physical ones in 2014[1].

This new social reality is an important dimension to consider when designing the management tools necessary to cope, embrace and leverage the organizations into their next stage within e-Businesses and e-Processes.

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[1] telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/mediatechnologyandtelecoms/11535355/Digital-music-revenues-overtake-physical-sales-for-the-first-time.html

Every part of all organizations is facing this paradigm shift – from sales (as per mentioned before), to marketing (digital marketing is getting an increasingly big role on the overall marketing strategy of all organizations, both on the more traditional dimension on e-Advertising - buying advertising spaces on different platforms), to the new social network dimension (where companies are having an ever growing activity of socially engaging with their employees and customers), and Human Resources related activities (where most processes can be digitalized or even automated).

The Human Resources departments are facing a common challenge: how to successfully embrace this new digital reality within what seems an administrative task, and take this rather unique opportunity to further develop its role on the organizational development at a strategic level?

The introduction of IT within HR related tasks has come a long way, from simple ERP solutions targeted mainly to support and bring more efficiency on HR related tasks such as payroll or Personnel Information Management to sophisticated solutions as SAP's Success Factors – a cloud based solution targeted to support HR processes within a User Experience (UX) driven approach, or ESS[2] / MSS[3] services, that are both integrating IT solutions on previously manual – or with a low degree of automation – and transforming the current role that the "traditional" Human Resources Departments have within all organizations.

All in all, it is a very much spread assumption that e-HRM (using Human Resources Information Systems) adds value to Strategic HRM. However, such statement lacks conclusive evidence to support it (Bondarouk & Rüel, 2013). The arguments built up upon the idea that e-HRM lacks support are complemented with specific points of view spanning different dimensions of e-HRM practices. From an operational point of view, according to Bondarouk, Harms and Lepak (2017) some theory is showing that e-HRM might just turned HR officers into HR IT officers – the HR headcount is still the same, but busy with technical topics connected to the HR Information System maintenance and support (Gardner, Lepak & Bartol,

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[2] Employee Self-Service

[3] Manager Self-Service

2003). Also, that there is under usage of the newly available information in HR strategy planning and management (Dery & Wailes, 2005), simple data storage (Haines & Lafleur, 2008), and lack of organizational engagement in HR tasks (Reddington & Hyde, 2006)[4].

The general perspective on the challenges linking Human Resources Information Systems to strategic Human Resources calls for further investigation in this topic (Bondarouk, Harms & Leepak, 2017).

Within the literature on the topic of value creation in e-HRM contexts, there are some consensual dimensions of value creation, normally bundled under the umbrella of the comparison under use value and exchange value – added value on meeting the customers expectation, regarding process, results and other HR outputs and added value on minimizing costs, thus maximizing the financial efficiency of HR related tasks (Rüel & Kaap, 2012).

Our goal within this research is, then, to provide some hints on how to proper measure and seek for the "hidden dimensions" of value creation within e-HRM, by probing, in a finer detail, dimensions used to determine if and how added value is being created with e-HRM and if these dimensions are connected to Strategic HRM. A possible output from these analysis is a matrix crossing categories that have been found to add value to build a diagnosis tool helpful in making decisions whenever implementing e-HRM.

For clarification purposes, we state the specific goals for this empirical analysis:

1. Scan through the theory on value creation in e-HRM and Strategic HRM and design finer analysis dimensions. This may enable us to build a theory-based concept of a set of applicable dimensions and their respective categories.
2. Map the above mentioned dimensions according to the organizational stakeholders. This will allow for a better understanding of the critical agents to be involved in the decision making or as part of the process.
3. Propose a decision support tool for HR-IT related implementation projects. This is a scorecard based tool showing the degree of compliance with preset requirements (as

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[4]Bondarouk, T., Harms, R., & Lepak, D. (2017). Does e-HRM lead to better HRM Service? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*:9, 1332-1362.

identified in goal 1). This may allow management to steer the investment in such tools with a more comprehensive and knowledgeable overview of their strategic benefits.

To achieve these goals, we will conduct a case study within a multinational organization, by analyzing the different processes that are part of HR dimensions, characterizing which dynamics feature the "adjustment" process of the HRM policies with the HR IT investment, and how these dimensions leverage the strategic HRM policies.

The ultimate goal of this research is to pin-point the best suitable strategic approach for the development of both the HR Strategy conjointly with the HR-IT architecture and its focus, specially focused on multinational organizations. This adds, in our view, both to theory building and applied value and enables a better policy making regarding e-HRM.

The remaining of this dissertation will offer an overview of existent literature on e-HRM, passing by the evolution of HRM, shifting into e-HRM, HRIS, to move on to show methodological options concerning data collection (namely, interviews) and analysis (content analysis). Later the thesis depicts the organization under analysis as well as the main findings concerning categories and their rank in frequency. Results are finally discussed against the background of theory and a conclusion is outlined to match our goals.

II. Theoretical Framework

2.1. THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Pinpointed at the end of the XIX century, with the Industrial Revolution, the rise of the modern industry was the driver of an economic and social transformation that had no other matches so far. For the first time, due to the possibility of mass-production, the economy enabled ever growing industries and, as a consequence, the organizations that provided these products/services fueled the economy, which grew exponentially.

More and more, the economy shifted from small-sized organizations to big corporations, with a lot of different dimensions to manage at the same time. This does not mean that small or family sized businesses disappeared, quite the opposite, but a new reality emerged: the necessity to manage big organizations with all its inherent complexity (e.g. as logistics, production control, track records, or finances).

One of these dimensions that rose from the exponential growth of the organization was Personnel Management (mostly labeled today as Human Resources Management). This naming is quite a self-explanatory hint about the shift that this topic has seen within the organizations, and this is what we are going to further analyze.

As the Industrial Revolution sparked and enabled the development of mass production, this led to the development of "Industrial Cities": the convergence between the growth of the industries and the communities of workers that bundled near the production sites. This phenomena of a centralized work made it easier to develop control mechanisms by the production owners, and, thus, the polarized positions of employer and employee became even more polarized. Ultimately, a paradigm of managing by command was established with the organizations. Growing in complexity, this working norms were the corner stone that allowed a more efficient management of the existing workflows, later empowered by de development of the machines. (Wren, 2005)

All of this dynamics made clear the power distribution between the two polarized parties enunciated before: the power was centralized in the employer.

This is the background of the emergence of the so called 'Classical Organizational Theories'.

Classical organizational theories

These theories, known as the period of staff management, can be considered the first scientific approach to Personnel Management. As the name implies, the focus was to administratively manage the staff, i.e. managing the workforce using the most efficient way. These theories were mainly characterized by the authority-based management style, the efficiency primacy and by the idea that employees were a cost, therefore subject to maximum efficiency.

Ever since Frederik Taylor, prosperity was the target and four core principles were set to maximize this goal, the so called "Workforce rationalization": Labor development[5]; scientific determination of the most efficient work methods [6], Specialization [7] and Performance Supervision[8]. Max Webber's authority-based bureaucratic approach favored a management model built up upon the concept that the best way to manage an organization was through the legal basis of the power distribution determined by norms: In his "perfect organization", the administration and the workforce are heavily polarized and all relations between two parties are clearly stated, from task and role descriptions, to formal hierarchy, qualification criteria or wage determination, all of the dimensions of the labor relationships should be, in this approach, institutionalized as a norm within the organization (Wren, 2005).

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[5] Specific definition and planning of the tasks.

[6] Applying the scientific method to analyze and determine the most efficient work practices.

[7] Employee should perform their tasks as per the best way possible, as per determined through the scientific analysis.

[8] Both the work methods and the employees themselves had to be scrutinized in order to assure that they were being effective as designed.

Human Relations Approach

The economic depression that happened in the end of the 1920s made it clear that the classical approach was not being effective on its purpose: these models were not being able to support the organizations on overcoming the American economical downfall.

This led to new approaches on the search of theoretical tools to further understand employees' behavior and motivation, in order to achieve the so needed increase on productivity. As a result, the School of Human Relations emerged and it was mainly characterized by acknowledging that the social and psychological dimensions in organizations were a key element to understand the dynamics of productivity.

Beginning with the famous Hawthorne Program that began to unveil the intrinsic sources of motivation [9], this approach had a tremendous awareness effect, raising attention to psychosocial dimensions that need to be taken care when managing employees. From Maslow's Human Necessity Hierarchy, that states the main five different human necessities, both primary (physiological and safety) and secondary (social, self-esteem and self-accomplishment) and the subsequent Herzberg approach on personal needs, using a similar binary perspective to develop the concept of the Hygienic and Motivating Factors (the first connected to the physical elements of one's comfort level such as safety, salary, and the later connected with self-motivation factors such as personal and professional growth or organizational acknowledgement), to McGregor's X (workers can be inherently resistant to work and thus need to be controlled) and Y Theories (workers can be inherently self-motivated to the development, and seeking for social and professional acknowledgement), all of those

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[9] A controlled experiment on work conditions (office lightening) conducted by Western Electric on the 1920s unveiled that the productivity was not being changed by the different lightening settings but actually because of the fact that the control groups took pride on their assignment and thus, became more motivated to better do increase their work quality. Also due to receiving attention by decision makers.

highlight the criticality of the socio-psychological dimension of employees productivity. (Wren, 2005)

This paradigm shift was the first step towards the development of what can be called Human Resources Management: more than a behavioral dimension, staff management had now to consider and work on the emotional health of the organizations within the quest of the workforce productivity increase (Neves, 2012).

Holistic Approach

From a self-managed and self-driven mechanism, the idea that the organizations are actually both a product and a producer of their own environment started to flourish, on the 1950s and 1960s. Inspired in the General System Theory [10], this paradigm shift within organizational management introduced and further developed different theoretical approaches that take the organization into account as an open system, permanently interchanging with the surrounding environment. (Wren, 2005)

This approach was one step further on Human Resources Management in the sense that it made it aware that Organizational Management has not a single form solution for success. It is awakening to the importance of both inputs and outputs coming to and from the organization, and only by acknowledging their influence within the organizational reality it is possible to better prepare it to the upcoming challenges.

The first approach leading to the concept of Strategic Human Resources Management (SHRM) was then put into place.

Strategic Human Resources Management

The transition from the 1980s to the 1990s brought a growing awareness by HR regarding the strategic orientation of the organizations (Delery & Doty, 1996), and thus emerged the

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[10] From biologist Ludwig von Bertallanfy, on the interdepend relationship between social and natural sciences

concept of SHRM, and a new set of proposals that made the effort of aligning – or enabling this alignment process – the organizational strategic management with the HR Management policies and practices.

Consensually recognized as the operationalization of an HR Management set of policies designed to meet the organizational strategy, Strategic Human Resources Management can be defined as "… a competency-based approach to the management of human capital, focused on the development of durable, imperfectibly imitable and non-tradeable human resources" (Banberger, Biron & Meshoulam, 2014: p8).

A prototypical example of a central model is Jeffrey Pfeffer's "High Performance Work Practices" (1998): a set of applicable guidelines to foster this interdependency – from compensation programs dependent on organizational performance to sharing of financial information about the organization –, alongside with other guidelines aiming to bring the employee closer to the organization by providing a better environment – from the assurance of a stable career, to the de-construction of the *status quo* elements such as working spaces and compensation policies – by closing the gap between the different hierarchical levels of the organizations.

The integration of literature on SHRM was better achieved by the consolidated contribute of Banberger, Biron and Meshoulam (2014). These authors offer a very comprehensive outlook on the theoretical foundations of SHRM, by showing that SHRM has two main approaches grounded on different theoretical contributions: 1) "Rational Choice Theories"" and 2) "Constituency-Based Theories).

Rational choice theories acknowledge that the strategic value originates from the behavioral engagement of the employees in the business strategy (Behavioral Role Theory) but also from the fact that the strategic value of the employees can be found within all dimensions of the organization, thus deserving to be managed as an asset (Human Capital Theory) and that both the organizational and individual (employee) interests can be aligned (Agency Theory).

Constituency-Based Theories identify the normative nature of stakeholder legitimacy as the driver for organizational changes (Institutional Theory) and suggest that the key to the

development of the strategic value of HR lies on both increasing the perceived value of HR activities and increasing the organizational performance liability on the performance of their human resources (Resource Dependence Theory).

The full theoretical overview and the contributing authors can be found on the table below (Table 1).

Approach	Theory	Original Author
Rational Choice Theories	Behavioral role theory	Katz & Kahn (1978)
	Human Capital Theory	Becker (1964)
	Transaction Cost Theory	Williamson (1979;1981)
	Resource-based view	Barney (1991); Grant (2010)
	Agency Theory	Eisenhardt (1989)
Constituency-Based Theories	Institutional Theory	DiMaggio & Powel (1983) Meyer & Rowan (1977)
	Resource dependence theory	Pfeffer & Salancik (1978)
	Multiple constituency / multiple stakeholder approach	Freeman & McVea (2001)

Table 1 – Consolidated overview on the theoretical basis of Strategical Human Resources Management theories

2.2 SHIFTING INTO A DIGITAL ORGANIZATION: E-HRM ROOTS AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

After all, what is e-HRM? Meaning "electronic Human Resources management", this acronym can be defined as "... a set of information technology (IT) applications that cover 'all possible integration mechanisms and contents between HRM and IT's aiming at creating value within and across organizations, for targeted employees and management…" (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2013, p 391).

The e-HRM concept comes, then, as a digital human resources strategy, enabled by the implementation of Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS) within organizations.

As HRISs are, quite fundamentally, the foundations of e-HRM development, it is important to have an overview on their development.

The concept of HRIS was the first paradigm shift onto what can be called e-HRM, and it has been defined as an overall system for Human Resources data management and maintenance (Kavanagh, 2009).

Traceable all the way back to the beginning of the 1970s, this concept was coined by Vicent Ceriello in 1973 (as "Human Resources Management Systems") and was the first acknowledgement of the deployment of such tools for strategic applications that overcome the "simple" track sheet of employee personal information, but rather a potential enabler of organizational development by its power to provide strategic information to management within organizations (Ceriello, 1991).

Despite the fact that this kind of systems was already making its way into the management procedures and tools, especially on big corporations such as AT&T, or General Electric (Ceriello, 1991), its emergence is generally traced thought different authors to the different events happening on the 1970s, specifically the growing demands on governmental accountability through the "Equal Employment Opportunity" Act, several regulations on health and security related topics and even data privacy (Kavanagh, 2009).

The beginning of the 1980s was the turning point on the adoption of such systems: the technical evolutions turned these systems affordable to the large majority of American businesses and from 1 million dollars, in ten years (1991) this industry became an 80 Million Dollar industry (Ceriello, 1991).

2.3 Human Resources Information Systems

Mapping different types

The definition of the different types of HRISs is as well an exercise of historical reflection, according to Kavanagh (2009), meaning that these categories were the result of a development process across time.

This author traces the development of HRISs by identifying three core types of systems and adding a fourth one: *"…Electronic Data Processing (EDP), Management Information Systems (MIS), (…) Decision Supporting Systems (DSS)(…)"* and "(…)Human Resources Management Decision System" .

The first being a digitalization of the information archive process, the second being the first steps on the operationalization of HR information in order to support direct managerial decisions and the third as the consolidated support approach to management (Kavanagh, 2009). The latter, "Human Resources Management Decision Systems", is mainly characterized by its multi-level approach, by clustering the key-information available according to different managerial levels (Kavanagh, 2009).

What this evolution shows is that the role of such information systems was increasingly being targeted onto growingly more strategic support tasks: from a digital inventory on personnel information, the development of such systems gradually enabled managers across the organization on making well-educated and supported decision-making processes, through a sustained development that first started on the acknowledgment of the importance that this information could have for direct managers (MIS), and gradually acknowledged the importance of both flexibility and customer orientation (DSS) and then acknowledging the importance of providing a multi-level and on-time response of organizational necessities (HRMDS) (Kavanagh, 2009). Below we depict the full overview on Kavanagh's (2009) overview on HRIS typology (Table 2).

Type of HRIS	Key features	Author
EDP – Electronic Data Processing	"Focus on data, storage, processing and flows at the operational level"; "Efficient transaction processing"; "Scheduled and optimized computer runs"; "Integrated files from related jobs"; "Summary reports for management"	Sprague & Carlson (1982)
MIS – Management Info	"(…) information focus, aimed at middle managers"; "Structured information flows"; "Integrations of EDP jobs"; " Inquiry and report generation"	Sprague & Carlson (1982)
DSS – Decision Support System	"(…) Decision focused"; "Emphasis on flexibility, adaptability and quick response"; "User initiated and control"; "Support for the personal decision-making styles of individual managers"	Sprague & Carlson, 1982)
HRMDS – Human Resources Management Decision System	"Report formation and generation based on identified managerial needs for decision making"; "Categorization of reports by management level"; "Time of report generation based on frequency of managerial usage…"; "Historical information retained and reported in a timely manner (…)"	Kavanagh et al. (1990)

Table 2 – The four types of Human Resources Information Systems (Kavanagh, 2009)

2.4 CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS ON HRIS

The development of the HRIS was, as stated, a growing path onto the full involvement and awareness of stakeholder needs on the information production and management. The next pages will then provide an overall overview on *how* exactly this was done: this means that the different (and principal) HRIS business cases will be referred, as per stated by Kavanagh (2009):

Personnel Administration

Personnel Administration has been the corner stone for the HRIS development. This means that the first steps of the development of such systems was an effort to automate and leverage the potential of managing the information regarding any organization's employees.

The main trends identified by Kavanagh (2009) refer to a "(…) *Service Oriented Architecture*" that has four concepts supporting it:

- The shift towards self-service portals, characterized by being a strong tool on the improvement of the accuracy and quality of the HR Information made available to both employees and managerial teams, being the lack of control on some of some of the data – as the information is maintained directly by the stakeholders involved, it is possible that some of the governance required is lost – and even the possibility of data privacy issues due to this very same fact that the data base is not 100% secured within the HR Department.

- The emergence of Shared-Service Centers, as an "next-step" strategic approach on data maintenance: the establishment of such organizations is linked to both increases on the ability of organizational flexibility regarding internal processes, cost reduction achieved through the centralization of this kind of activities and the improvement of both organizational engagement and accountability and transparency (through close-

contact application such as CRM[11] tools) applied to HR processes, as well as the overall process quality (creating a business excellence culture enabled by operational focus on such activities).As an disadvantage, Kavanagh (2009) points out the potential of "over centralization" of such organizations, that might jeopardize this efficiency, quality and reachability gains, due to the overload of handled processes, as well as the "depersonalization" of the HR Department.

- Outsourcing the HR tasks, as probably the oldest approach to the effort to achieve agile personnel administration. Kavanagh (2009) situates all the way back as 1945 the existence of organizations aimed to support third-party businesses on such topics, mainly to support on the increasing compliance requirements that came with de development of business activities. This author pointed out the cost saving of having such services on specific internal processes that miss the overall scope of the HR organization on each specific HR Department (as they are not happening that often) and the quality increase that comes with contracting specialized vendors on tasks that are not a business usual within the contracting organization, being the big disadvantages the loss of the strategic organizational mindset within HR activities and the "(…) loss of institutional expertise" (Kavanagh, 2009), that, in line with the previous point, loses track of the organizational identity and potentially jeopardizes the strategic mindset and abilities of the HR administrative tasks.

- Offshoring of the HR, enabled by technological advances, and due mainly to financial efficiency benefits, requires a thorough evaluation on compliance with legal topics: due to the fact that HR tasks by its nature are heavily connected with nationally determined legal frameworks, this is perhaps the most challenging domain when planning and designing such a service organization.

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[11] Customer Relationship Management

Recruitment and Selection

HRIS are used, fundamentally, to support two key dimensions of recruiting and selection: the attraction and engagement of candidates and as a support tool to perform a better informed selection**.**

Kavanagh (2009) has done a great job on linking how HRIS are matching the recruitment objectives outlined by Breaugh and Starke (2000):

- "Cost of filling the Job Opening" – HRIS is supporting and enabling a cost reduction as big as up to 95% by making online recruiting possible, and the monitoring of the efficiency of the recruitment process is as well much more accurate and measurable within such a framework (Kavanagh, 2009).

- "Speed of filling Job Vacancies" – HRIS online recruitment frameworks are shown to increase the speed of the recruitment process through different studies and case study analysis (Kavanagh, 2009).

- "Psychological Contract": The internet, and more accurately the organization's web pages, within the recruitment processes, are focal points towards convening a pleasing, exciting outlook on what is the organization and how it is characterized, but at the same a very suitable way to moderate and coordinate in a sustainable and reasonable way the expectations of the candidates. In other words, this kind of mechanisms allow the organization to have a better control over the employment branding process that is engaging the candidates, allowing to mitigate breaches in the match of the expectation created within the recruitment process and the actual employment experience (Kavanagh, 2009).

The selection process is as well supported by HRIS - this is done by automating a wide range of assessment tests such as psychological tests, knowledge and logical assessments – or at least making them a lot easier to process – and creating a recruitment data base that can potentially enable a much quicker analysis of the candidates, by centralizing the applicants information and enabling the recruiter to target a specific skill set (e.g. foreign languages, certificates on

specific coding languages, etc.). This is a great advantage both for the candidate and the organization, which is processing this data: a quicker recruitment process is the output of this advantages and both the candidate and the organization are pleased with the speed of the process (the candidate due to the fact that he is not "dragged" into a monthly long process, the organization due to the fact that the organizational need for human resources is fulfilled) (Kavanagh, 2009).

Training & Career Development

The integration and further development of HRIS in Training & Career Development Processes was conceptualized as a sequential process, characterized by three core elements that highlight the advantages brought by HRIS in this kinds of processes:

- "Identification of Training Needs" – By empowering and enabling that different data can be generated and easily distributed and managed across the organizations, HRIS's are enabling a more informed decision on the business needs that converge into training and development needs: this kind of systems can easily leverage performance (either personal or organizational) statistics and within an efficient and fast way, to link them to the training measures more suitable to meet the points that require some extra work on (Kavanagh, 2009);

- "Development of Training Measures" – The emergence of what is commonly known as e-Learning, i.e., the digital learning process, can be, in practical terms, several things (videos, on-line trainings, telecom calls, etc.) but the one element that does not change is the digital environment. HRIS's can leverage the learning process in two dimensions: by reducing costs, thus increasing the training potential by knocking to the ground the often used "no budget" argument within organizations, and enabling that the development process of employees can be done with a lot more opportunities at the starting point, and in generally enabling the organization to have better trained staff without a massive investment on training, and by providing new and more engaging tools to better perform the learning process: from multimedia and responsive tools, that

increase the learner's engagement, to test and learning environments that enable and secure a steady learning process (Kavanagh, 2009);

- "Training and Development metrics" – Finally, HRIS are enabling and moving this process forward by enabling a precise reporting and evaluation process on the learning process, by quickly engaging and bringing the feedback of all parties involved, as well as by supporting a reliable tool on which such analysis as Philllips's ROI[12] (1996) and other benefit-cost relationships can be measured within a traditionally difficult area to measure this kind of quantitative investment returns (Kavanagh, 2009).

Benefits and Compensation

"Performance, rewards, and payroll systems are the basic exchange between employees and employers: Employees provide performance, and in exchange employers provide rewards, which are distributed via payroll systems" (Kavanagh, 2009, p 340)

The upper mentioned paragraph sums up in a nutshell the basic reality about this dimension in Human Resources Management: the policies made on this topic are, hand in hand with the performance or the individual and the organization.

HRIS, in this domain, is bringing both a structured and reliable framework to provide both accountability on such topics, information reliability and legal compliance (Kavanagh, 2009).

This author de-constructs the HRIS reality on Benefits and Compensation within four dimensions:

- "Performance Management" – This dimension refers to the possibility that most of HRIS systems enable, to generate and to monitor different performance indicators (so called KPI's13) and to potentially enable a connection between these systems and the compensation schema in place within the organizations, thus supporting the decision-

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[12] Return on Investment

[13] Key Performance Indicators

making process on performance evaluation by making it more reliable, transparent and fast (Kavanagh, 2009).

The most practical example on this case would be the connection between sales indicators and a variable portion of a salesman employee being calculated from that. Such alignment is facilitated and automated through the usage of HRIS.

- "Compensation" – Referring to the organizational compensation planning, this dimension refers to the possibilities that both internal and external inputs can be processed through HRIS tools in order to generate a well-balanced compensation policy, while making the entire process a lot smoother, involving a lesser amount of effort within the organization.

  The decision support is made by providing this reliable information when planning and preparing a compensation package (Kavanagh, 2009)

  An example can be made out of Expatriate Management Processes: The process of designing a compensation package to this specific situations can be immensely thorough and have multiple input sources regarding the data that, in the end, generates the final package. Such HRIS are vital in enabling the computing power of such different external data landscapes such as GDP, average cost of living, comparable purchase power at host countries, alongside with many other elements, and are in tune as well with other internal relevant data sources such as the before mentioned performance management frameworks.

- "Benefits" – HRIS are a suitable and engaging tool on managing Benefits across organizations in the sense that they are centralizing the reporting on total benefits costs and attribution, as well as enabling a transparent window to the employees to be fully aware of the benefits that they are entitled for. (Kavanagh, 2009)

- Payroll – The automation of the payroll process is the corner-stone of the value creation process within the usage of HRIS: This systems create a systematic, robust and much more reliable tool to have a smooth payroll calculate, and a big source of cost and resource allocation on compliance related activities, specifically tax, social security

and other governmental communications regarding the cash-out flow of the organizations related to their workforce, with a tremendous cost reduction (Kavanagh, 2009). To exemplify this, a simple question could be made: How many people would be necessary to calculate payroll related takes for a global company, with a total number of associates on the scale of hundreds of thousands, with HRIS? A big number, but nothing remotely similar to if it was done without such tools: each small location would need to have at least a team of full-time devoted employees performing this task.

2.5 E-HRM TODAY: VALUE CRIATION WITHIN HRIS

Up until this point, it was possible to grasp on the development of the overall HR Management approaches, the development of HR Information systems and the current state of affairs on how exactly these systems are being used within the overall HR Processes, making it thus necessary to explore the final question that might arise into mind: in which ways is this HRIS integration into HR Management creating a competitive advantage to organizations?

Our analysis is then completed with the task of reviewing the literature on value creation within the e-HRM topic.

Ruël and Kaap (2012) developed a large literature review based on two opposites that bundle the quantitative efficiency gains (exchange value) and qualitative increase (use value). For that, a considerable number of specific improvement situations are enunciated in order to describe both quantitative and qualitative efficiency increases.

Strohmeier (2012) shows a more refined analysis, with three main levels of value creation: operational (regarding efficiency gains), relational (regarding the improvement of the overall organizational dynamics), and transformational (connected with the topic of Strategic HR Management).

Our proposal is, taking the extensive theoretical analysis performed by Ruël and Kaap (2012) and complementing it with further theoretical contribution[14] that support this analysis, to refine to a greater detail the dimensions of the value creation within HRIS implementation, i.e. the value on e-HRM.

Flexibility

Functional Flexibility

The ability to support and enable new digital and remote teams was one of the first organizational outputs connected to the implementation, by enabling digital communication and home-office tools (Sousa, 1999).

Flexible HR Practices

The contribution of Sekhar, Patwardhan and Vias (2016) on HR Flexibility offers a strong theoretical background on the elements of flexibility and how they are connected with the HR Strategy and value creation.

Deeming that flexibility within HR is a form to both maintain and further deploy competitive advantages this authors bring to the table the enabling properties of flexibility-creating systems within HRM systems (Sekhar, Patwardhan and Vias, 2016).

Concretely, it is the possibility of such HRIS to embrace flexible HR practices such as dynamic compensation schemas or flexible recruitment processes that bring this specific value creation dimension into HRIS and e-HRM (Sekhar, Patwardhan & Vias, 2016).

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[14] The mentioned overview can be found in page 84 of the Annex Attachment.

Quality

This dimension of value creation is related to the improvement of the quality regarding the different elements within HRM: Process, Data, Performance and Client Satisfaction. At the end, these four dimensions are showing a quality dimension needed to be taken into consideration when implementing HRISs.

Process Enhancement

Evidences on the positive effects of HRIS on Process Enhancement – within, of course, HR Processes – are very well documented. From assistance of double-work mitigation, to improving recruitment processes by matching personnel information with organizational needs, as well as the improvement that HRIS enable within expatriate management (stabilizing the information sources and making the communication process a lot smoother) (Weeks, 2013), to a better informed decision making process within HR Topics (Christopher & Reddick, 2009), HRISs are shown to be powerful tools on the enhancement of HR Processes.

Accuracy

Accuracy is yet another output of HRIS in regards to quality, and it referred to the adherence of the data recorded within HRIS's and the actual organizational reality.

Several authors connect HRSI with increases on the quality of the data within the organization that can either be used to have a better informed planning process (Weeks, 2013), as well as a generator operational efficiency, due to the fact that good data quality prevents double work on administrative processes, or assuring that the data collection is more reliable (putting the responsibility on the very own associates, using Self-Service dedicated web-service applications (Weeks, 2013).

The accuracy increase is also reachable due to the automation of high-effort administrative processes such as payroll, where the error-risk is immensely mitigated and thus, improving accuracy regarding the organizational data (Reddick, 2009).

Performance

Another dimension connected with the overall data quality or quality increase coming from the application and usage of HRISs, is the performance increase, i.e., the improvement of the output coming out of the performance of the tasks of any given member of an organization.

This topic has been linked both with the evidence that such applications have an active role within improving the overall performance of the HR Department by allowing HR to increase its service levels (Christopher & Reddick, 2009), as well as better organizing it's workload (having a positive influence on the performance output (Weeks, 2013) and as well to the overall organizational performance, as it is freeing both employees and managers from formerly administrative work that would require a big effort of all parties involved (Weeks, 2013).

Client Satisfaction

Finally, client satisfaction is regarded as the last but not least element within quality value creation. This dimension is essentially connected to two main points:

On the first hand, it is connected with the expectations that the organization rests upon the HR stakeholders, and there is some literature that brings to the table some hints on the fact that HRIS's are managing to do just that by enabling HR to perform at an improved service level and reduced timeline (Christopher & Reddick, 2009).

Organizational Engagement

Organizational Engagement can be conceptualized as a socio-psychological dimension of the intrinsic elements that make part of the relationship between separate individuals and organizations (Becker, 1960) and it is going to be operationalized in this study as the participation of the employees and managers in the HR Processes.

Reachability and Employee commitment

Referring to the ability that different agents involved in HR Processes have to engage with the HR Organization, this dimension is leveraged by HRISs ability to connect different parties involved – by bridging the "gap" between HR and the rest of the organization, the members of such organization are more and better engaged within the HR Processes (Reddick, 2009), thus improving organizational commitment (Bondarouk & van Riemsdjiik, 2014).

Transparency

In general, transparency refers to the fact that something is perfectly clear and defined. Two concepts are essential to understand the dynamics of transparency within an organization and specifically within HRM.

Accountability & Availability

The first concept is accountability, which the literature points out as a key dimension on the strategic relevance of HR: by being able to trace and account the operational outputs of HR activities, both the operational and strategic relevance are easier to measure and to infer their actual relevance and if they are not being an operational burden (Jones, 2016). Literature shows as well that one of the success factors to achieve success in HR activities, in particular managing HRISs, is to be able to account the organization for the operational results (Nielson, 2014).

Availability is, as well, a focal point of the strategic relevance of transparency in HR Management: The ability of having access to key information delivered by HR IS's allows key stakeholders within the organizations to be able to respond both faster and with a great deal of quality to their operational needs (Reddick, 2009).

For example, the fact that HRIS's allow a quick, stable and direct access to strategic information enable faster hiring processes, which, at the end of the day, generates actual financial efficiency within the organization, by mitigating work overload scenarios that end

up decreasing productivity – the right workload to the right workforce becomes, thus, easier and faster to achieve (Reddick, 2009).

Efficiency

The efficiency gains are one if not the most researched dimension within value creation in e-HRM, and, in a nutshell, it refers to the ability that HRIS's have to improve the efficiency the tasks performed within HR, i.e., delivering the same or a better output while maintaining or decreasing the resources invested on such activities. And resources can be both financial and operational. (Ruël & Kaap, 2012)

Operational & Financial Efficiency

Literature shows that when operationalizing e-HRM, by using HRIS's, HR tasks are able to be optimized, meaning that redundant steps in HR Processes are mitigated, thus making the process more efficient (Ruël et al., 2004, Bondarouk & Ruël, 2009, Heikkila, 2010).

This decrease of redundancy and operational focus is the focal point of operational efficiency: e-HRM supports HR Organizations to deliver faster and better processes, requiring increasingly less resources (either time from the associates or time from HR Departments),and allowing HR to focus on its strategic outputs (Ruël et al., 2004).

Operational efficiency is then translated into financial efficiency in the sense that less resources are being used when performing HR Tasks, meaning that less resources are being allocated to HR, thus creating a decrease of cash flow going into these specific activities.

This is both true directly within HR Staff, by optimizing the size of HR Structures within the organizations, due to the need of lesser staff to perform HR activities (Lawler, 2005), and indirectly by decreasing the time that the hole organization needs to invest on HR related tasks, by automating some of its processes and outputs (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2010).

At the long term, generating and promoting the strategic focus of HR through the optimization of the HR Processes (Ruël et al., 2004) increases the business development output, by being both an enabler and a developer of the overall strategic focus of the organization,

indirectly generating an increase of profitability, by supporting the growth and development of the organization (Foster, 2009).

Empowerment

This dimension is concerned with the transformational role that e-HRM and HRISs can have within the organizational in general, and within the HR Role in particular. This means that the output abilities provided by HRIS's are enabling the HR stakeholders to become precious resources when building up strategic planning.

Strategic Decision Making & HR Transformation (Strategic Partner)

The overall strategic pertinence of e-HRM and HRIS resides on the output abilities that such systems have in delivering organizational data. HRIS's are gathering, automating and enabling in some cases new data collection, in other cases improved data collection, within the organization (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2010), such as integrated HR Metrics (Kavanagh, 2009), which are then valuable and insightful looks onto the organizational reality and are a supporting mechanism to have better informed decision making processes.

These new tools are specifically empowering and shaping the role of HR within the organizations by enabling HR to take on a strategic focus (Ruël et al. 2004; Bondarouk & Ruël, 2010). This is done essentially both by developing operationally efficient HR mechanisms, as mentioned before, creating space and opportunity to HR to embrace a more consulting-oriented role regarding HR Development (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2010), as well as by supporting the development of optimized HR structures such as HR Shared Services Centers (Bondarouk, Harms & Lepak, 2017).

2.6 A Balanced Scorecard approach to evaluate the implementation of HR IT Systems

The theoretical overview on the value creation dimensions within e-HRM, enabled a comprehensive mapping of the critical areas on which it is required that HR IT creates added value.

Emerging from this overview is, them, the need to somehow steer align the before mentioned dimensions onto a strategic alignment with the organization's goals.

Therefore, we suggest a theory-based approach to deploy the decision making processes within the organizations when implementing HR IT solutions.

Several decision-making models exist, from statistical models that use probabilistic calculations to determine the likelihood of certain events to happen (and therefore, map their risk), to the behavioral approaches that determine several dimensions on which the psychological decision making process occurs.

Within the topic of the current discussion, the discussion on decision making is set on an organizational point of view.

The greatest question to be asked, at this point, would then be the following: How is it possible to decide upon the implementation of a certain HR IT Solution, making sure that it would be the right decision to the overall organization? In which way a strategic option could be done regarding to the implementation of HR IT (and all IT applications for that matter) systems within the organizations?

A landmark on the development of a strategic decision making process was the concept of the Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

Balanced Scorecard - The theoretical foundations

Born from the corporate need to design new tools to measure the organizational performance, this model was the result of the work started in 1990 in the Nolan Norton Institute (KPMG's research unit) aiming to provide new tools to map the performance of the participating organizations in regards to their original strategical goals (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

The original model determines four main, interdependent, dimensions of the organizational performance, which should be the basis for a successful strategic planning of an organization's business, by defining both the goals and measures to achieve them in each dimension:

Financial perspective: Essentially concerned with financial efficiency, ultimately this dimension is making sure that the operation being analyzed is financially viable, and brings financial added value to the involved stakeholders (e.g., shareholders). Is connected to the Internal Business Perspective (due to the fact that Financial success is done by having efficient procedures in place on the daily business operations) and to the Customer Perspective (The overall efficiency of an organization is a selling point to their customers and an important dimension of the image that customers hold on their providers.

Customer Perspective: Focuses primarily on the client satisfaction: how can the customer be satisfied, i.e., how can the customer get what he wishes from the organization that is providing the product or service to him? Besides being interconnected with the financial perspective as per above mentioned, this as well connected with the Innovation Perspective in the sense that the customer focus should as well aim to provide a continuously improving service to their customers.

Internal Business Perspective: This dimension is highly focused on the organization's performance and it exists to make sure that daily operations are both effective and efficient. Besides the mentioned connection with the financial perspective, this dimension is as well connected to the Innovation perspective due to the fact that only a fully running organization is able to innovate in a structured and strategic way.

Innovation Perspective: Last but not least, this dimension is focused on continuous improvement and value creation. As above described, this dimension has its strategic connections on both Customer Perspective (better services equal more satisfied customers) and Internal Business Perspective (an effective and efficient organization is the key element to engage innovation);
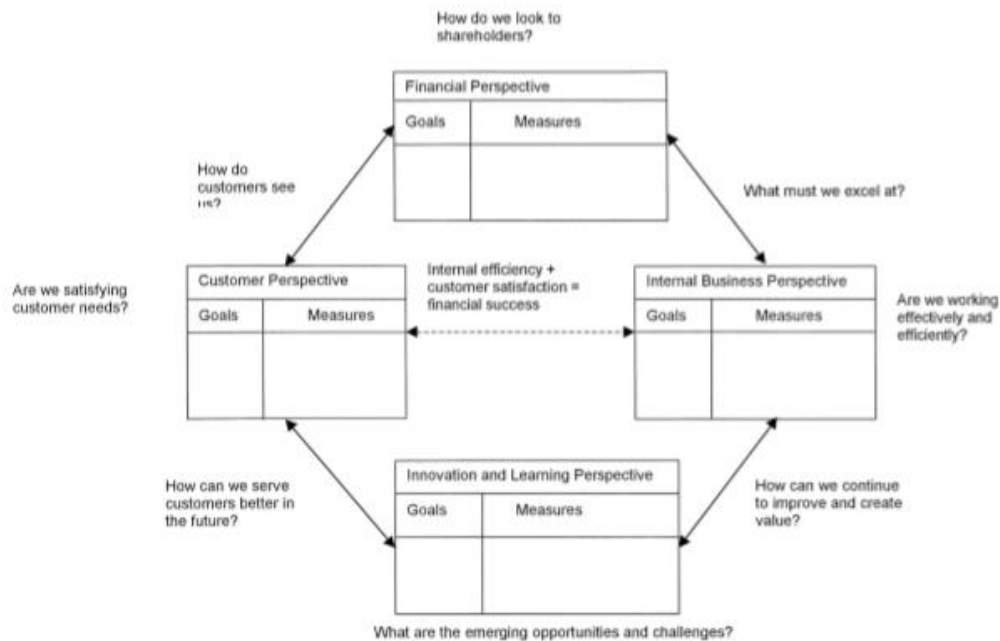
Image 1 – Graphical representation of Kaplan & Norton's Balanced Scorecard concept (1996) *in* Martinsons, et al. (1999) *The balanced scorecard: a foundation for the strategic management of information systems*, Decision Support Systems 25 1999 71–88

Balanced Scorecard and HRIS implementation.

The adaptation of Kaplan & Norton's Balanced Scorecard was spread amongst organizations and had some of it success documented on later work on the original author's, proving itself to be a reliable partner on strategically planning to the fast pace changing economy (Kaplan & Norton, 2001).

The application of this theoretical framework on specific dimensions of the business operations started to emerge, from accounting, (Kasurinen, 2002) financial operations (Davis, S., & Albright, 2004) or even environmental sustainability (Epstein & Wisner, 2001), demonstrating empirical evidence of its ability to serve narrow-focused applications and providing, nonetheless, strategic and beneficial output.

The usage of Balanced Scorecard within the implementation of IT Systems was already existing in the late 90's – by proposing an ERP-Usage centered version of the traditional Balanced Scorecard (Image 2), Rosemann & Wiese focused on delivering a tool that framed the implementation of an ERP solution on a holistic perspective. (Rosemann & Wiese, 1999)
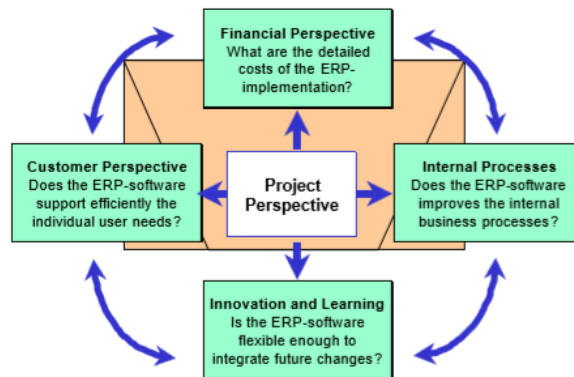
Image 2 – Graphical representation of Rosemann & Wiese's adaptation of the original Balanced Scorecard model *in* Rosemann & Wiese (1999), *Measuring the Performance of ERP Software – a Balanced Scorecard Approach,* School of Information Systems Queensland University of Technology Brisbane, Australia

Although being a first step on the awareness process that a full-scope analysis is necessary to ensure strategic relevance upon the implementation of IT Systems in general, the work of Martinsons et al (1999) took this approach one step further on adapting the existing matrix, by considering the business needs on the implementation of Information Systems. In the image below the overall structure is displayed:

How do we look to
management?

Business Value Perspective

Goals	Measures

How do
users see
us?

What must we excel at?

Are we satisfying
user needs?

User Orientation Perspective

Goals	Measures

Internal efficiency +
customer satisfaction =
service success

Internal Process Perspective

Goals	Measures

Are we working
efficiently?

What can we do to
meet the future
needs of users?

Future Readiness Perspective

Goals	Measures

How can we continue
to improve and create
value?

What technologies and business opportunities/challenges are emerging?

Image 3 – Graphical representation *in* Martinsons' Balanced Scorecard for HRIS Implementations *in* Martinsons et all. (1999) *The balanced scorecard: a foundation for the strategic management of information systems*, Decision Support Systems 25 1999 71–88

The major adaptations are focused on the nature of the customer (usually being an internal customer) and the interdependency between this element and the Internal Quality, emerging from the concept of internal client – even more, internal quality is deemed to be critical to ensure customer satisfaction (Martinsons et al., 1999).

III. METHOD

A qualitative approach is best suitable whenever a research has an inductive purpose. Despite published research, there is an insufficient body of knowledge to comfortably opt for a deductive approach. As stated, our purpose is to understand the organizational needs on value creation when implementing e-HRM (i.e. integration of Human Resources Information Systems), which is better grasped via a qualitative approach such as a case study (Yin, 2014).

The case study being done within this research is coming from a set of interviews and documental analysis within a multinational organization, leader within its market, and generally speaking innovation-focused.

Due to the fact that the pre-requisite for the data collection within the organization being analyzed was that the real name of the company was not disclosed, due to data privacy reasons, we will address this organization as Company A. Also, in order not to allow the organization to be singled out of the market we will take care about disclosing idiosyncratic information.

Both an extensive analysis on the current state of affairs of the HR and HR-IT policies was put into place within this organization – via documental analysis – and an exploratory study with key stakeholders was done in order to be able to trace some new insights on the most important dimensions to consider when "digitalizing" the HR department and strategy.

This dissertation is going to make usage of the data analysis to set a decision making support tool which may be useful to structure policies aimed to optimize e-HRM. For this purpose we adapted the Balanced Scorecard approach for Information Systems implementations rationale (Martinsons et al, 1999) which was built upon the overall concept of Balanced Scorecard, (Kaplan & Norton, 1996), a tool design to support the organization to focus their operations on strategic goals.

In its core, this is a qualitative study: the big part of the effort made on investigating this topic as put on understanding, within a close range, the status quo of the organizational stakeholders in regards with the overall HR IT approach within the organization being analyzed.

Specifically, these stakeholders, later described in a greater detail In this chapter, are part of both local HR Management (Local HR Director), Country HR Management (National scope HR Management), Divisional HR Responsibility (Transnational HR responsibly over a specific business unit across the organization) and HR-IT related departments: meaning different departments involved within the process of having the HR IT strategy and task operationalized, and involved in projects that aimed the integration or improvement of IT applications for HR related tasks and activities.

As stated, the goal here is to have a first draft of possible focus points on the future development of HR IT related projects and investments.

The procedure is going to be explained as well in a greater detail later on this chapter.

3.1. Data Sources and Analysis

There are two data sources: printed or publicly disclosed documents, and interview contents. The documents regard the strategic HR policies put into place within the organization. These documents are made available to all of the organizational community, i.e. all employees are involved and have access to this kind of strategic statement by the company. Due to restricted circulation, these documents cannot be made available in attach.

We conducted 10 (ten) individual interviews with different stakeholders on both the domains of HR Coordination, HR IT Coordination, HR-IT Support, and Development and HR Policy Making. The data collection was done through a semi-structured interview, with a specific approach of a specialist's interview (Meuser & Nagel, 1991).

This kind of data collection is better suitable when one needs to identify and further analyze a specific reality. All pre-requisites of a successful (Turner, 2010) interview were met to better ensure the analysis suitability for the collected data.

Due to the nature of the analysis being carried on, this was the preferred approach. It dies has its own empirical advantages and limitations (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Kohlbacher, 2006;

Krippendorff, 2012) which are important to enunciate in order to clarify the scope of the analysis being carried out.

Subjectivity: This kind of interview limits the interviewee subjectivity due to the fact that the focal point of interest is the expert's knowledge.

Structure: The Interview Script[15] is a structuring document and steers the interview.

Methodological Issues: The line between different roles (expert vs party involved) is sometimes hard to define and possibly the interview can have such difficulties.

Methodological Limitations: The knowledge about the subjects being addressed are limited by the interviewee's own knowledge.

The overview of the different interviewees can be found on the table presented below.

Nr	Title	Role	Nr. of years in the organization	Duration of interview
1	**Head of HR IT Support**	Head of HR-IT Support Department	1,5	27'
2	**Divisional HR IT Responsible**	Responsible for ensuring HR IT operations for one of the Business Units	4,5	32'
3	**Policy Maker for HR Process**	Responsible to define the corporate guidelines for 3 HR Processes	12	32'
4	**National HR Coordinator**	National HR Coordination	4,5	35'
5	**National HR Coordinator**	National HR Coordination	< 1	35'

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[15] The Interview Script can be found in page 90 of the Annex Attachment

6	**HR Transformation Project Lead**	Responsible for implementing the HR Transformation Project	31	30'
7	**WW[16] Head for HR IT**	Global Coordination for HR IT	39	24'
8	**Head of Global M&S[17] for HR-IT**	Global M&S Coordination of HR-IT	33	43'
9	**National HR Coordinator**	National HR Coordination	20	24'
10	**Local HR Director**	Local HR Management	22	24'

Table 3 – Participant's Title, responsibilities, years in the company and duration of the interview

3.2. Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected, or the corpus (Bardin, 1977), consisting on both interviews and internal documentation, was subject to the scientific diligences to such kind of analysis - unbiased report of information, pattern identification and category creation (Pereira, 1999)

The content analysis technique is within the inductive approaches (bottom-up) due to its affinity to qualitative data analysis (Mozzato & Grzybovki, 2011) and the data analysis was conducted using both the occurrence method – how many times a concept is enunciated – and the structural method – check between the relationships of different concepts – in order to fully map the organizational point of view on the topics being discussed.

This kind of approach was found best suitable to the purpose of the analysis being carried out due to the characteristics of this empirical approach (Ghiglione, et al., 1998):

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[16] Worldwide

[17] Maintenance and Support

➢ The *a-priori* knowledge – consolidated theoretical framework – is used and steers the data analysis (Bardin, 2011), described below.

➢ Thus, it is developed from pre-defined analysis frameworks;

➢ It enables – and intends – to test pre-defined and theory based hypothesis;

It is important to mind that such approach might generate biased findings on the account of being produced by the very own party that is responsible for it within the organization. However, proximity is not a determinant of subjectivity bias. By adopting a specialist interview focus we endeavored to refrain from nurturing a "personal opinion" sort of request. Also, the fact that the interviewer had previous acquaintance with the interviewees allow for much higher level of trust, and therefore, higher reliability of information provided (knowing in advance that ethical research standards were assured).

Having an inductive content analysis with *a priori* content analysis procedure comes as with the possible empirical limitation of this methodological approach: such a deductive method implies that the output of the retrieved data is restricted to the pre-defined hypothesis (i.e. existing theory).

The theoretical framework that will be used to steer the qualitative data analysis is based on the outstanding effort of compilation of Rüel and Kaap (2012), which was an extensive literature review aiming to pin-point the current status on theory supporting one of two main domains of value creation with e-HRM supported by Bowman and Ambrosini (2000) by Exchange Value (Economic or financial efficiency gains) or Use Value (Linked with operational HR Tasks development).

Our proposal is to further revise this very same table, and to generate new dimensions and categories out of it, with some literature review. The adapted table with this overview is available as an attachment to this thesis [18], and further information on the theoretical dimensions outlined can be found within the literature review.

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[18]The full adapted table is available as an attachment on page 84 of the Annex Attachment

The data analysis, for clarity reasons will be operationalized using the conceptual framework depicted below on Table 3.

Dimensions	Categories	Definition
Flexibility	Functional	Functional flexibility translates the ability to articulate individuals operating in different settings (e.g. using IT mediated communications to conduct a meeting etc)
	Process	Process flexibility is the ability the platform has to allow changes in planned processes
Quality	Process Enhancement	Process enhancement is the overall perception of process management improvement due to IT
	Accuracy	Accuracy translates the level of precision of information provided in IT systems
	Performance	Performance is the level of positive change that IT brought into HR KPIs
	Client Satisfaction	Client satisfaction translate the level of fulfilment of client expectations concerning HR as a service provider
Organizational engagement	Reachability	Reachability is the perceived proximity HR has with each employee
	Employee commitment	Employee commitment translates the degree of identification employees have with the organization due to participation enablement by IT
Transparency	Accountability	Accountability is the degree to which one can pin point the precise moment and employee involved in any given decision or task execution.
	Direct access	Direct access refers to the ability employees have to be updated on procedures and ongoing relevant information without an intermediary.
Efficiency	Financial Efficiency	Financial efficiency refers to cost reduction
	Operational (Task) Efficiency	Operational efficiency refers to both time and workload optimization per capita
Empowerment	Strategic Decision Making	Strategic decision making refers to the use of IT to gather critical information to support strategic decisions.
	HR Transformation - Strategic Partner	Refers to the leverage IT systems offer to turn HR into a strategic partner (i.e. in enabling HR to show its ROI and contribution to strategy execution).

Table 4 – Identification and definition of HRIS value creation categories

The content analysis will make an effort to scan the position of the several stakeholders interviewed on the referred dimensions and to identify both the dimensions where value is being created with e-HRM and where value creation is still lacking – thus creating a roadmap to possibly steer future e-HRM investments and integrations.

IV. CASE STUDY: CHARACTERIZING THE ORGANIZATION

4.1. The Organization

Although the organization has required to stay anonymous participation in this study, it is possible to present some of its features without compromising this agreed principle.

The information presented below aims to serve the sole purpose of enabling a fair perspective on the organizational scale being analyzed further on.

The organization is an international company, operating worldwide across all continents, continents, in the areas of engineering, technology, and industry. Its headcount is estimated is above the hundreds of thousands worldwide.

The organization is, generally speaking, managed within a business unit focus – meaning that each business unit is steered in a business-driven approach - in what regards production of products and services. Support functions such as HR are steered at the headquarters level and then operationalized regionally.

Taking that into account, and to further understand the organizational reality concerning the HR Organization within this company, HR IT specially impacts on HR local responsibilities, HR country responsibilities, Corporate-HRM, Corporate-HRM & Information, and HR-IT shared services.

HR local is the unit that is in charge of defining local HR strategies for each plant according to guidelines provided by HR country. HR country is the responsible unit to ensure the policy making and implementation according to guidelines provided by HQ.

These guidelines are defined by the corporate HRM unit. Finally, corporate HRM & Information unit is in charge of translating corporate HR policies into IT processes management solution design. HR IT shared services is the unit that supports corporate HRM and Information unit in operationally defining and maintaining HR IT operations (by setting

rules and processes and providing platform maintenance and support so to guarantee a 24/7 operational IT for the entire corporation).

4.2. Characterizing the HR & HR IT Strategy

After acknowledging the stakeholders, it becomes important to understand how HR and HR IT are working together within the organization. For that, Kavanagh's perspective on the main areas of HR IT Development is being used.

Personnel Administration

Personnel Administration within this organization is being operated currently at two different levels: being maintained by local units by one side (residual percentage) and the big majority has shifted to something comparable to Kavanagh's Shared Services Organizations (2009), as well as to self-services scenarios that are connected through specific HR IT tracking tools to be able to perform different request to the HR Organization.

Some countries have already adopted, in recent times, offshoring the HR Processes, with multiple countries bundling administrative HR tasks in the same country.

Recruitment and Selection

This organization operates the Recruitment and Selection process using a HRIS designed to that.

Currently, the organization is on the middle of a transition from a more standard and rigid solution (still operational in most of the countries where this organization is located) to a more candidate-focused solution.

Regardless of that, both with the "old" HRIS and with the new, the objectives outlined by Breaugh and Starke (2000) were being met already, and improving with the mentioned new solution, specifically generating financial efficiency gains by assuring that the opening stays

empty as less time as possible (making the process faster), especially with the new candidate-focused e-HRM solution.

Benefits and Compensation

This is maybe the least developed set of HR Processes within this organization's HR IT Landscape.

Only payroll has an operational HR IT Tool supporting the process. Despite being the only one, that doesn't mean that this topic is being overlooked: up until 2017, about 75% of the organization is now operating the same or a very similarly built HR IT application for Payroll, being the target for 2019 is 90% of the world, being that the testimony of the organizational focus on improving one side at least of this HR Dimension.

Training & Career Development

Last but not least, this cluster of HR Processes for Personal Development – Training, Career Development and Performance Management – are being operated into the same HR IT Tool.

By converging and aligning these three different processes, the organization is streamlining and aligning the whole HR Development Process, by making sure that these three processes operate focused on being an 'end-to-end' solution to the organizations.

This means that, for example, within the same tool and using the same data, managers can decide the required trainings for any given associated based both on the feedback of already occurred trainings, the sift of operational focus by the employee or due to the results of the performance review process, in the case that it makes clear that a specific training is necessary or not. With the same approach, Performance Evaluation, by being easily available in the same place that Career Development, can generate tremendous synergies: in the HR Processes, this organization is already taking performance data as key information to support Career Development Processes.

V. RESULTS

Content analysis is better made explicit by showing frequencies with which the categories occurred. For clarity sake we shall show one table per dimension related to value creation within E-HRM. Namely: flexibility, quality, organizational engagement, transparency, efficiency, and empowerment.

In order to establish in advance a clear definition of the terms being applied, the analysis of the frequencies of each category was done by both presenting the total of occurrences and presenting their relative frequency: By dividing the total number of occurrences with the number of the contacted persons within each business units, i.e., each kind of stakeholder, one can be able to establish a point for comparison.

The value on which occurrences are deemed to be of relevancy is a value of ≥ 1, due to the fact that it is the minimum value that is comparable to an occurrence stated by a stakeholder which had just one interviewed party.

5.1   Flexibility

The first category on flexibility – functional flexibility, referring to the ability of engaging different elements within the organizational structure towards the same task or activity – seems to be generally not very acknowledged by all stakeholders involved (relative frequencies below 1) being the corporate HR IT business unit the most aware.

The core values found within this category were the ability of IT Systems to converge teams located in different offices, and within an overall worldwide business model, plus the ability of optimizing the everyday workload by improving communication channels.

"I see the benefits of this kind of tools, especially on virtual teams, or in teams that are staffed with team members that are not seeing each other personally on a regular basis, if you have an international team, or a tram in a different location"
Policy Maker for HR Process

The second category within value creation based on flexibility, is the process flexibility – the adaptation ability within the HRISs.

In this case, both National HR Coordination and corporate policy making business units are heavily engaged: these two stakeholders register a relative frequency of 4, being the most mentioned topics, followed by HR IT Corporate development (3).

These figures seem to suggest that the ability to embrace the multiplicity of the organizational reality is a key element for the strategic approach of these three business units.

	Functional Flexibility		Process Flexibility	
	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Frequency	Relative Frequency
HR Local (1)	-	-	-	-
HR Country (3)	-	-	12 (3)	4
Corporate HR (2)	1(2)	0,5	8 (2)	4
Corporate HRI (3)	2 (3)	0,7	9 (3)	3
HRS IT (1)	-	-	1	1

Table 5 – Frequency table on the number of mentions about Functional and Process Flexibility

These stakeholders mention the need to embrace the different realities within their scope of responsibilities as the main driver for the need to have such HR IT Systems that allow them to operationalize the business needs that each locations has.

Feedback on the enablement that HR IT applications gave to some HR Processes was given, showing that HR IT applications can operationalize and support flexibility increases within HR Processes.

"… it became absolutely necessary to implement the right IT for recruiting: we need to have more flexibility (…)"

Head of Global Maintenance and Support for HR-IT

These stakeholders, nonetheless, underlined the pressing need for an evolution within this category by highlighting some of the negative effects lacking such flexibility has on some of the current HR IT applications.

"We will have certain areas where we will have the 'classical organizations', within the next ten years, maybe, and on the other side, or at the same time, we will have more agile organizations. So, we need to prepare at least different sets of business models (…) so that performance management is one example (…) we have to get rid of the idea that 'one size fits all'".

HR Transformation Project Lead

5.2   Quality

Quality stood out as a core dimension within interviewees. Almost all stakeholders had something to say regarding the 4 categories that comprehend this dimension of value creation in e-HRM.

All stakeholders interviewed agreed both on the process enhancement that HR IT had already enabled, and the overall ability that such systems have and should continue to have. The figures show that: all stakeholders involved in decision making regarding both HR Strategy (Local and Country HR Responsibilities and corporate HR processes steering) and HR IT Strategy (Corporate HR IT Coordination) have relative frequencies above 2, showing that this was a topic recurrently mentioned - multiple times - by these business units.

The overall feedback on this category was the ability of HR IT systems to allow that the processes are conducted in a better way, or a bigger output can be delivered out of that process.

"I think that the recruitment process has improved absolutely, (…) more than 20 years ago (…) I had to go to the HR Department, they had to check paper, (…) it had much more effort (…) now I can see it on my screen in home office and can decide in a few minutes…"

Head of Global Maintenance and Support for HR-IT

	Process Enhancement		Accuracy	
	Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
HR Local (1)	2	2	-	-
HR Country (3)	7(3)	2,3	3 (3)	1
Corporate HR (2)	8 (2)	4	2 (2)	1
Corporate HRI (3)	9 (3)	3	5 (3)	1,6
HRS IT (1)	2	1	-	-

Table 6 – Frequency table on the number of mentions about Process Enhancement and Accuracy

Accuracy was as well quite a consensual category, even though less mentioned than the process enhancement dimension. Accuracy has gathered the positive consensus of those three stakeholders that have the business operations of centralizing information and delivering strategic outputs out of it. Figures show that both HR Country, Corporate Policy Management and Corporate HR IT Management overcame the threshold ($\geq$ 1 relative frequency) showing that this is an important part of creating value on their daily operations through improving the overall quality.

The feedback on this underlines accuracy as a key factor of reliability within operationalizing the processes of which they are responsible for, mentioning the importance of having the correct data to be able to deliver accurate and insightful strategic output.

> *"We were not able to control the process neither to analyze (…) the process, nor the process results. And then the Personnel Development tool was implemented and that now gives us the opportunity to have a global perspective on the development of our associates".*

Policy Maker for HR Process

	Performance		Client Satisfaction	
	Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
HR Local (1)	-	-	-	-
HR Country (3)	1(3)	0,3	5 (3)	1,7
Corporate HR (2)	2 (2)	1	4 (2)	2
Corporate HRI (3)	1 (3)	0,3	12 (3)	4
HRS IT (1)	-	-	4	4

Table 7 – Frequency table on the number of mentions about Performance and Client Satisfaction

Performance, however, was the least mentioned category within this dimension: Only one of the stakeholders shows a relative frequency of observations about this topic (Corporate Policy Design), and the remaining two stakeholders had average frequency of 0,3 – meaning that this topic what briefly mentioned as an important factor to create value.

The feedback regarding this category underlined the way how new HR IT Tools allowed the HR Organization to increase their operational results by delivering a faster solution to the organization's needs regarding HR tasks and activities.

"[About the implementation of the new e-Recruiting tool] the feedback from the market as well as the success we achieved so far was about to candidates in the pipeline, speed and so on (…) we did the right thing".

HR Transformation Project Lead

The most valued category within the dimension of quality on value creation by operationalizing e-HRM practices turned out to be the Client Satisfaction.

Client Satisfaction was mentioned with meaningful relative frequencies (≥ 1) by almost all the stakeholders – only the Local HR business unit did not mentioned this topic – and half of the these were of 4 (C/HMI and HRS-IT), by the stakeholders invested into bringing the HR and IT Businesses together, and their feedback points out exactly to this focus on the HR Business needs.

"So, why did we chose the new e-Recruiting tool? This tool is…we worked with a different approach. (…) the idea was: candidate first, make the system as attractive as possible for the candidate, because to find talent is so hard that if people, the candidates, don't accept the tool, when doing the application, you have no chance. So, the clear statement was: Candidate first. Make it as easy as possible, as nice as possible for the candidate."

Head for HR IT Worldwide

HR Country and HR Process Design are also engaged with this dimension (1, 7 and 2 relative frequencies), stating the need that they have to meet the expectations of their organizational clients (i.e., managers and associates), and how HR IT Tools are helping to reach this goal.

"It is important for HR IT to support the needs of requirement of the organizations, to act as a facilitator, as a support."

Policy Maker for HR Process

5.3   Organizational Engagement

The organizational engagement was, in this set of interviews, the least mentioned dimension on generating value to HRM using HRISs.

	Reachability		Employee commitment	
	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Frequency	Relative Frequency
HR Local (1)	-	-	3	3
HR Country (3)	1 (3)	0,3	2 (3)	0,6
Corporate HR (2)	-	-	-	-
Corporate HRI (3)	-	-	3(3)	1
HRS IT (1)	-	-	-	-

Table 8 – Frequency table on the number of mentions about Reachability and Employee Commitment

Only one occurrence in total (0, 3 relative frequency) was made regarding the reachability, and the opinion was that this kind of systems can be helpful in bringing HR and the organization closer or together.

Of a bigger importance to the stakeholders, however, seems to be the engagement of the organization within the HR Processes. Meaningful values are traced primarily to the HR Local business, as the party primarily responsible to operationalize HR Processes (Frequency of 3), underlining the need to consider the engagement of the parties involved (managers and associates) in order to successfully implement a HRIS and furthermore, to leverage its acceptance within the organization.

(…) what we ask to all managers and business teams is that they are our Partners as well (…) and now, with the information being available [due to the new HR IT Applications]

what we ask is that they have a more active role (…) with these new tools their role can be much more active"

The same overview is shared by the corporate HR IT Management business unit (relative frequency of 1) and the National HR Coordination, but with a lesser amount of references (0, 6 relative frequency).

5.4   Transparency

The value of transparency as a mechanism of accountability is greatly appreciated within the most operational units of HR Management. With a relative frequency of 3, this stakeholder is the leading party seeking and acknowledging this dimension within HR IT. This is, within the daily business, translated to the benefit that the HR Operations take on having all parties (within their processes) aware of their positioning and responsibilities.

"What this tools do is that they bring a solution that allows that the information is made available in a more (…) transparent way, either for the manager, for HR, the information (…) can be viewed by any of us so there is more transparency on the processes themselves."

Local HR Director

	Accountability		Direct Access	
	Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
HR Local (1)	3	3	9	9
HR Country (3)	1 (3)	0,3	1 (3)	0,3
Corporate HR (2)	-	-	3 (2)	1,5
Corporate HRI (3)	4 (3)	1,3	2 (3)	0,7
HRS IT (1)	1	1	2	2

Table 9 – Frequency table on the number of mentions about Accountability and Direct Access

However, the most valued feature within transparency in HR IT is the availability - the ability of all parties involved in the HR Processes to have access to the information.

This was heavily stressed by the most operational level – Local HR –, by underlining the benefits that arise from having all the information regarding HR Processes, namely the fact that the increase of transparency on the process increases the perceived sense of organizational justice and professional acknowledgement (Relative frequency of 9).

"In terms of data availability, the process is much easier. For example, we are doing a Performance Review this year, but we have available in this system, in the same way and for everybody, managers and associates (…) and before the idea that I have as HR is that this kind of information was a little bit scattered.

Local HR Director

The same feedback is given as well within the HR IT Support unit (Rel. Frequency of 3), what speaks to the operational nature of this dimension.

Nonetheless, this dimension is still a point of awareness for both corporate HR Policy Design (1, 5), Corporate HR IT Coordination (0, 7) National coordination of HR Operations (0, 3).

5.5 Efficiency

Financial Efficiency, interestingly, was the least mentioned dimension within the overall subject of efficiency gains when implementing HR IT Solutions, only being addressed once in the course of 10 separate interviews.

This fact can be traced to the fact that the current organizational procedures make it as a requirement to implement such HR IT Tools, to document the financial savings that are enabled or acquired with the implementation of the new IT Tool.

	Financial Efficiency		Operational (Task) Efficiency	
	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Frequency	Relative Frequency
HR Local (1)	-	-	3	3
HR Country (3)	-	-	11 (3)	3,7
Corporate HR (2)	1 (2)	0,5	5 (2)	2,5
Corporate HRI (3)	-	-	13 (3)	4,34
HRS IT (1)	-	-	3	3

Table 10 – Frequency table on the number of mentions about Financial and Operational Efficiency

The opposite can be found with the operational dimension of efficiency: this is something that is consensually pointed as a value creation dimension of e-HRM.

The highest value of references can be traced to Corporate HR IT Management (relative frequency of 4,34) , where this Operational efficiency is the direct output of their strategic planning and development, having the feedback on the ongoing projects on the effects of implementing HR IS within HR activities.

[Questioned about weather e-HRM facilitated or complicated HR Processes] *"Facilitating. To say it very clearly, I think it helps the processes, to make it simple. And as well clearer (…)"*

Head for HR IT Worldwide

Both Local (3) and National (3,7) HR Coordination units deem this very same feedback on the implementation of new HR IT Tools, such as payroll systems, that automate and streamline the processes in order to make them much more efficient. This feedback has, although, the nuance of being especially applicable to the operational effects in HR Practices, as the effects are most felt by the operational ranks of the organization.

"(…)when I first joined, payroll would still be done almost manually, it was really something dreadful, and taking this into consideration, I think it made a lot of sense to choose to proceed with the next step and the system implementation (…)"

National HR Coordinator

Corporate Process Design is also a stakeholder deeply affected by this, and their feedback reflects that (2, 5) – The implementation of operationally efficient HR IS enables the very own HR Processes to increase their efficiency – and vice versa. So this is a mutual agreement on aligning the way how the process is going to steer the IT application into its efficiency, or how the application can help in adjusting the HR Processes to achieve greater efficiency.

"(…) data is available at a global level and synergies can be gained (…) "

HR Transformation Project Lead

5.6   Empowerment

Following the operational efficiency improvement, the overall strategic relevance of HR IT and HRIS's in bringing to strategic decision making processes critical and pertinent information is the most mentioned category across the interviews carried out.

	Strategic Decision Making		HR Transformation – Strategic Partner	
	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Frequency	Relative Frequency
HR Local (1)	7	7	2	2
HR Country (3)	4(3)	1,3	1(3)	0,3
Corporate HR (2)	5(2)	2,5	1(2)	0,5
Corporate HRI (3)	4(3)	1,3	7(3)	2,3
HRS IT (1)	-	-	1	1

Table 11 – Frequency table on the number of mentions about Strategic Decision Making and HR Transformation onto a Strategic Partner

The local HR Management unit found this very important (Frequency of 7) on getting the wright information to management teams and to work teams to have a better-informed participation within HR Processes, thus achieving better results on these very same processes.

"The added value within this applications is the support in decision making process, management (…) they are essential for managing, to make a decision, to evaluate data (…)"

Local HR Director

This is especially important to the HR Process Design unit as well (2, 5), due to the fact that the ability to assist strategic decision-making processes by delivering good and reliable data is the foundation for the leveraging power of the very own processes – only by assuring that the right information is made available in the wright context can the HR Process be established as worthy of strategic relevance.

"In the future, I think we will have, we still need to have systems which are talking to each other (...) because only that will allow us to think of an more advanced form of analytics".

HR Transformation Project Lead

Country HR Coordination and Corporate HR IT Coordination find this dimension important as well (1,3) due to respectively ensuring the overall strategic relevance of HRM and ensuring that HR IT is in tune with the strategic HR approach of being a strategic partner for the business development of the organization.

"I think that this kind of HRM that puts the manager and the associate closer is the ideal situation. We should support in HR Consultation (...) and that is precisely what these new platforms are doing, so this is an added value, without any questions."

HR Local Director

Finally, the specific operationalization of the HR IT Tools to boost and support the Transformation process of the role of HR to a Strategic Partner of the business development of the organization is mentioned, especially by the Local HR Management unit (2) by one side, and Corporate HR IT Management (2, 3) and HR IT Support units by the other side, the two agents of HR Transformation processes and, thus, the more exposed units to this dimension.

By delivering tools that support the operational shift of focus of the HR Departments, HR IT is supporting this transformation process.

"(…) from a Strategic HR approach, yes, we need to free HR to more strategic tasks, that is the way, implementing HR Shared Services Centers and Employee Self Service Scenarios(…)"

Divisional HR IT Responsible

5.7 Emerging Challenges within e-HRM

The discussion regarding the status quo of the HR IT Landscape and the current state of affairs regarding the HR Processes and activities made clear that there were some situation, parallel to the dimensions that the theoretical framework anticipated and the common denominator between them is that they are operationalized by exogenous elements to the HR IT applications themselves.

The consolidated overview of the challenges, a brief description of the problematic behind and the number of occurrences during the interviews can be found below at Table 12, ordered by the most mentioned to the least mentioned.

Challenge	Problem	Number of occurrences	Improvement Opportunity
Complexity	System architecture / features too complex	11	Simplification
M&S[19] capacity	Lack of organizational capacity to deal with M&S activities to support HR IT Applications	8	Ensure adequate M&S Structure
Project Planning	Lack of adequate planning when implementing HR IT Applications	6	Proactive and Strategic Planning
Adoption of IT	Challenges on having the IT system accepted by the organization	5	Effective communication Strategy
Need for training	Need for training	3	Effective Training Strategy
HR Process Design	HR Processes not aligned with HR IT Application	3	Align Process Design and HR IT Development
Lack of investment	Lack of financial availability to HR IT Implementation and M&S	2	Significant investment in HR IT

Table 12 – Emergent challenges within HRIS Systems Implementation stated by the different stakeholders interview

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[19] Maintenance and Support

Complexity

The most mentioned issue when discussing the alignment between HR Operations and HR IT Development (11 occurrences) was regarding complexity – overall, the stakeholders that are in charge of Operational HR Coordination and (both worldwide and regional) feel that the available HR IT Tools are too complex, and this complexity is pushing away key stakeholders from the applications, either within HR, across the organization or even outside the organization when talking about e-Recruiting systems.

"(…) what I feel right now is that the HR Business Partners' complain a lot and have a lot of problems with the complexity of the IT Tools (…)"

National HR Coordinator

Capacity on M&S

Following complexity, the organization's capacity to ensure an adequate Maintenance and Support structure to the HR IT Landscape (8 occurrences) is something that was somehow underestimated and the feedback is that this is a working point due to the fact that the HR operational business cannot afford to have a large timeframe between identifying either problems or improvement opportunities – both the solving process of the first and the implementation schedule of the later are taking too much time and the negative impact is that both the HR Processes and the HR IT Tools aren't being used to the fullest.

"It can be the case that due to some system error (…) an associate is unable to work (…)It is unthinkable that (…) our response is something like (…) 'it will take five days to the systems to communicate (…) and then a ticket is necessary to do to the support teams (…) and they are overwhelmed with work and without capacity (….)"

National HR Coordinator.

Planning on HR IT Project Implementations;

Third on the ranking (6 Occurrences) is the lack of planning on HR IT Project Implementations: the stakeholders feel that the organizational response to HR IT demands was up until this point quite reactive – and the result was that solutions were implemented "on top", meaning that so fat the implementation of HR IT Systems was not planned holistically, i.e., a common strategy for the HR IT Landscape was missing.

[About HR IT implementation] *"(…) the pressure was very big on something has to be done and life is like a pendulum: if one end is pushed too hard, it is hard for the pendulum to be stable at the middle (…) and the sane with HR applications (…) we had the need to do something but we made projects and tried to implement them without a stable and good architecture (…)"*

Head of Global Maintenance and Support for HR-IT

Adoption of IT Solutions

There was a reasonable number of occurrences (5) mentioning the challenges that reside on the lack of coordinated and insightful communication regarding the HR IT Applications.

In particular, the stakeholders have the opinion that, parallel to the actual technological and processual improvement *allowing and stimulating* their engagement, it is need a communication strategy that actually *activates* the organization's engagement towards the new systems.

"If we don't 'sell' this tools very well to our internal clients, they will never value them, so we must 'sell' them well (…)

Local HR Director

Training to use the tools

With 3 occurrences, and connected with the previous challenge, in the way that refers as well to a communication process - in this case, not about the benefits of the tool but on how to operate it – this challenge resides in the fact that in some implementation projects, the training was not sufficient or didn't met the customer expectations.

This feedback comes to underline that besides a successful communication on *advertising*, that *brings* the customers, a successful communication on *training* the stakeholders is very important in order to *keep* the customers. In this situation, to perpetuate the organization's engagement towards the application.

"(...) not everybody has the same curiosity, or the same skill set , neither the learning curve is the same for everybody (...) And I think that with these new tools, which are essential (...) it ended up missing a little bit more training and support(...)"

Local HR Director

HR Process Design

With the same number of occurrences as the previous challenge (3), one of the challenges that was brought up by the interviewed stakeholders was the lack of alignment between HR Processes and HR IT Tools: The example presented by the stakeholders was referring to the separate development of the tools and the processes that actually led to a duplication of work.

For me, what doesn't make much sense, and I think this is something that we are going to realize (...) that was an error (...) is that the Request Tool, or at least the way that processes are designed with the Request Tool (...) which means, in reality we are having an unnecessary duplication of work(...)"

National HR Coordinator

Lack of investment

The least mentioned challenge (2 occurrences) was the lack of investment as the lack of financial availability from the organization is perceived as a potential barrier do the full development of the potential of HRIS's.

"What I see and what I recognize every year is that a lot of ideas are out there, that we could realize and that we could help the business to become more efficient. But, at the same time, we have a strictly limited budget (…) so there is a lot of potential, aligned on the street that we cannot pick up, due to missing budget"

HR Transformation Project Lead

VI. DISCUSSION

The discussion of findings evolves by focusing on value creation within e-HRM, to be able to pin-point the concrete dimensions on which most added value on HR operations across all organizations are most beneficiated (and consequentially, the entire organization as a hole), taking the insightful feedback from the key stakeholders interviewed from a multinational organization.

After that, a discussion about the challenges found within this very same interviews is enunciated, to underline some of the key dimensions and organizational challenges that Project Leaders (or such professionals in a position to implement HR IT Systems) are prone to face in such a demand, and provide them some tools for them to be able to design such a process / system that can as well mitigate those challenges as much as possible.

Finally, we propose to align Martinsons et al. (1999) Balanced Scorecard approach, specially focused on the implementation of IT Application, with the most relevant dimensions that our qualitative investigation allowed us to grasp, in an effort to frame those dimensions in a strategic framework that will support and guide HR departments to focus their investments on implementing HR Information Systems and make sure that these systems are aligned with the overall strategic policies in place for HR Management.

6.1   Value Creation within e-HRM

Value creation in e-HRM was discussed upon some of the key stakeholders of the organization and their feedback was collected and further explained within the results presentation.

Our focus will be, now, one of critically analyzing these empirical results, comparing the expected results that the theoretical background had previously grasped, with the operational feedback collected.

Within the topic of flexibility, there was an overall consensus on that HR IT Systems were enabling and leveraging the organization's ability to cope with and develop new kinds of teams, namely virtual ones, thus meeting the expected result from the theoretical background.

Regarding flexibility upon the process itself, the stakeholders' feedback was more one of necessity: while it is clear that this is a key dimension for value to be created within e-HRM, this was still not happening within the organization: so, empirical evidence shows as well that the stakeholders deem processual flexibility as a dimension to bring value to the outputs being delivered by HRIS's.

On what concerns to quality upon the operationalization of e-HRM, the empirical evidence supports the theoretical input on the enhancing abilities that HRIS's bring upon HR Processes: the feedback from the interviewed stakeholders shows that the implementation of such systems has in general increased the HR Processes quality, thus validating this theoretical hypothesis.

Accuracy was as well another empirically supported dimension, coming from the theoretical background: the stakeholders had a strong belief that the improved accuracy of the data available was developing the analytical and strategic abilities of such information.

It is important to mention that the risk management abilities that the theoretical background suggested, of having accurate data, did not have empirical support from the data collected.

Slight – although existent – empirical evidence on the performance enhancing abilities was found upon the data analysis. While supporting the theoretical hypothesis that HRIS's bring value to HR by as well improving the performance of HRM in general, the empirical analysis suggests that this ability is somehow overlooked – or undepreciated.

Client satisfaction ended up being the most empirically supported dimension on creating value through quality increase: the theoretical hypothesis that by attending to the needs of those stakeholders who are critically involved in each processes was supported by the empirical investigation.

.Organizational engagement, both within the dimensions of reachability – as the ability of the HR Organization to be closer to the organization – and the Employee Commitment – as the overall engagement from the organization *towards* to the HR Organization had an almost irrelevant empirical presence, being the theoretical hypothesis that had the least empirical validation, suggesting that this dimensions are not critical to generate added value to HRM.

On the other hand, transparency had a strong empirical validation.

Both accountability, deemed to have its strategic relevance based on the fact that the traceably of responsibilities within HR Operations is a key factor to be able to identify inefficient work streams and thus optimizing them and availability, which theoretical hypothesis underlines that the ability of the output information of HRIS's to be accessible in an easy and direct way is connected to increased operational results (faster hiring processes for example), have their claims support by empiric data analysis.

This results suggest, then, that transparency plays indeed an important role on creating value to e-HRM.

Regarding efficiency, one curious output from the empirical analysis was that of the practically irrelevant mentions to financial efficiency, failing to validate the theoretical preposition that supports the direct claim that e-HRM is reducing costs within HR Operations.

Operational efficiency, on the other hand, had a strong empirical validation: feedback from the stakeholders clearly stated that, in general, HR Operations where meaningfully optimized – being payroll the most clear example – and thus validating the theoretical hypothesis that e-HRM is a powerful tool in optimizing HR Operations, this achieving, indirectly, financial efficiency: by optimizing the HR Structure, unnecessary resource allocation to such tasks was mitigated.

This disparity might be associated to the fact that, as per institutional procedure, implementation projects require a financial cost-benefit analysis that can be the cause for the lack of feedback regarding this topic, thus biasing the empirical results by making this a pre-requisite for such implementations, and the results interpretation should take this *nuance* in consideration.

Last but definitely not least, the Empowerment can be understood as the direct strategic relevance of e-HRM.

Within this dimension, both the strategic decision making enabling attributes of e-HRM outputs coming from the theoretical framework, underlining that the ever growing capacity that HRIS have to deliver significant and strategic output regarding the organizations internal information, and the enablement role that e-HRM plays on transforming the HR Role from an administrative role to a Strategic Partner, by both automating and optimizing administrative tasks as well as generating increasingly complex and insightful data regarding HR Metrics within were supported empirically.

The empirical evidence collected stresses these very same abilities and suggests that maybe the most critical dimension on value creation is the strategic focus – meaning that the development of such HR IT Applications must always focus, besides the HR Organization and the whole organization with specific needs, on the business requirements and challenges of the whole organizations.

Putting it into simple words, when planning and designing both HR IT Tools and e-HRM strategies, it is vital to make sure that all this output is helping the organizational 'boat' to 'sail to the same direction'.

6.2   Challenges on implementing HR IT

Our discussion up until this point was focused on the value creation elements *within* e-HRM, and these emerging challenges make up a complete blueprint of the value creation challenges *to* e-HRM.

As emerging elements, they are not supported by theoretical background – and due to that these are ought to be considered (as regards this study) as empirical hints on the challenges that can exist and need to be overcome in order to successfully achieve HR IT implementation projects: these are the exogenous – yet parallel – elements that shall be attended when implementing new HRISs.

Being the biggest issue found within the empirical analysis, the complexity of the HR IT systems is being a crippling agent to the process of creating value with e-HRM.

The empirical data suggests that currently, HR IT development is too focused on both on the technical and operational points of view – meaning that they reflect essentially the skill set both of IT developers or HR Specialists.

To overcome this challenge, simpler applications need to be designed, taking into consideration that, at the end of the day, the big majority of their target users is uneducated in both IT development – might not be even technologically savvy – and HR Processes.

Another issue found was related to the lack of a stable and adequate Maintenance and Support structure regarding the HR IT Landscape.

What does this mean? In 'business' language, means that within the analyzed organization, HR IT operations lack, sometimes, the backup structure necessary to assist in case of any trouble or technical issue.

The feedback collected empirically of a week-long situation of an employee being unable to work is crystal clear: To increasingly complex and interdependent HR IT Systems, the organization needs to invest in a comparable Maintenance & Support structure.

Lack of planning seemed to be, as well, a crippling agent when it comes to the strategic output of e-HRM: the feedback collected empirically showed that several stakeholders feel that there is no clear strategy behind the 'big picture' of their HR IT Landscape, both when it comes to have an aligned strategy (on premise vs cloud solutions, for example) and the very own nature of the HR IT development is showing this lack of planning, due to its responsive nature – it is solving problems that are being reported to the organizations, instead of focusing on thinking proactively about these and new problems and needs that may emerge.

So, in a nutshell, what the empirical results suggest is that HR IT planning must be both holistic and proactive in order to deliver a coherent and cohesive HR IT Strategy, having as its result the enablement of synergies between the different elements that make up the organization's HR IT Landscape.

Communication was empirically found to be as well a challenge to HR IT implementation and development: two separate issues within communication where reported, and are insights to yet another parallel dimensions that the empiric results suggest that HR IT Project Managers and HR & HR IT organizational stakeholders should consider as well when rolling out HR IT Applications.

The first one is concerned to communication strategy: Stakeholders feel that, currently, as per the majority of the HR IT Applications, there is really no structured communication plan behind the implementation process of such tools.

This means that the 'selling arguments' about the new HR IT Applications are not conveyed in a strategic or even a good quality – the feedback collected shows that communication failed on getting the message across from the Corporate HR business unit to the rest of the organization about the benefits of some of the HR IT Applications, making it harder for HR to engage the every-day user, distanced from HR or IT.

Lack of effective training on the tools was as well an empirical output from the data analysis, having the organization failed to fully communicate *how* to operate such tools.

What these empirical insights suggest is that a successful HR IT implementation projects shall build up a strong communication strategy, focused both on the value creation abilities of

the tool being implemented, and focused on flattening as much as possible the learning curve for its target users.

The HR process design was also deemed by the stakeholders as a source of challenges to HR IT Applications: empirical evidence suggests that poor process design decreased the efficiency of HR IT Tools.

How was this possible? By designing a process in such a way, that undermines the very own premise of the operational efficiency of the HR IT Application being implemented – and empirical data refers to a specific situation where the data collection process in HR Processes is designed in such a way that doubled the workload that HR Processes used to require from the HR Organization.

This empirical result suggests, then, that rigorous and strategic process design is needed at the very beginning of the implementation stages.

The lack of investment was the less mentioned challenge, but the empirical data is clear on the feedback that comes from key stakeholders within HR & HR IT: underfunding HR IT challenges the strategic benefits of these applications, due the fact that a lot of new development opportunities are not seized due do budget limitations.

This results suggest that organizations should prepare to acknowledge HR IT as a strategic investment field to achieve operational excellence, and allocate a fair amount of resources in order to enable HR IT to take full advantage of its abilities.

6.3   Using a Balanced Scorecard on the implementation of HR IT Systems

After discussing both the added value dimensions and the challenges that come with this kind HR Information Systems, it was our vision to be able to steer the decision making process on the implementation of HR IT Tools using both the emerging dimensions of value creation on Strategic Human Resources Management suggested by our empirical analysis, and the overall strategic framework provided by Martinsons et al. (1999).

Therefore, we propose to frame the key strategic dimensions of value creation emerging from HR IT systems within the overall strategic needs observable and stated upon the Balanced Scorecard approach, as depicted in the Table 13, and therefore suggest that Project Leads should strive to meet the strategic goals by considering as well the specific necessities of HR Related topics, when implementing HR IT Systems.

Within our approach, both the goals and respective measures for each dimension – Business Value, User Orientation, Internal Processes and Future Readiness - are designed to meet the organizations requirements like Transparency, Efficiency or Flexibility, supported by the core nature of the dimensions emerging from our investigation.

	Balanced Scorecard Dimensions						
Business Value	**Goal / Measure focus**	**User Orientation**	**Goal / Measure focus**	**Internal Processes**	**Goal / Measure focus**	**Future Readiness**	**Goal / Measure focus**
Efficiency	Operational / Financial Efficiency	**Organizational Engagement**	Reachability from overall organization to HR Operations		Process Enhancement / (better processes9		Process flexibility (should fit changing HR Processes)
	Functional (Task) Efficiency		Employment engagement (e.g. UX)		Accuracy (e.g. data accuracy)		
			Client Satisfaction	**Quality**		**Flexibility**	
Empowerment	Strategic decision making analytics	**Transparency**	Accountability (Stakeholders should become easier to identify)		Client Satisfaction		Functional Flexibility (should allow changing stakeholders)
	Should enable HR as a strategic partner		Direct Access / Availability (Stakeholders should be easier to reach)				

Table 13 – Distribution of the value creation dimensions within HR IT regarding their benefit to the strategic focus dimensions from the Balanced Scorecard approach

Value creation dimensions within HR IT

Business Value – Efficiency

The implementation of a new HR IT System should have both detailed, planned and measurable actions that bring efficiency to the organization by optimizing HR processes, both on financial and operational levels, i.e., the affected HR tasks should get cheaper and less redundant out of the implementation of an HR IT system. RPA (Robotic Process Automation) within Self-Service HR areas is a good example of a system implementation that brings down the internal cost of administrative tasks within HR Master Data maintenance.

Business Value – Empowerment

On bringing business value to new HR IT Tools, the stakeholders implementing them should assure as well that this IT Tools enable as well the overall organization to steer HR into a strategic alignment with the organization's own goals, by supporting the transformation of HR from a "cost center" to a strategic partner, so the applications should have to underline this very same difference as well. Furthermore, such applications should be able to support strategic decision making processes.

IT applications that steer operational HR away from those tasks without strategic relevance like the before mentioned RPA implementation on HR data maintenance processes is as well an example of such IT Tools, along with tools that enable the HR to better and more efficient in the tasks with strategic relevance (e.g. Personal Development).

User Orientation – Transparency

Transparency should be a focus on deciding whether implementing a new HR IT tool: New IT tools should strive to enable the organization to increase, in general, the transparency in the affected HR Processes, by focusing both on providing a clear accountability on the stakeholders involved (avoiding fuzzy processes where the end user – every associate – only knows that "HR is taking care of it", and providing increased reachability to the HR organization and to the HR Processes themselves.

Evidence of such approaches are, for example, HR IT solutions designed for Personnel Development processes, where both target's, evaluation criteria and career advancement

planning is done in a standardized process, where the associate is allowed to see how did what in which step of the process, being this data available all around the year.

User Orientation - Organizational Engagement

Organizational engagement is the key to assure the long term success of an HR IT application tool, as suggested by our empirical analysis: users that are engaged in the tools, are more prone to use it, and therefore acknowledge their beneficial features. New applications should focus on being easily reachable to the associates and allow them to reach the HR Organization and processes in a clear and simple way (our empirical analysis suggests that being able to provide transparency on the background processes within HR is, besides a requisite in its own, a valid reason to either engage or disengage users), and to put them as well *in* the HR Processes: rather than a stand by observer, the user should be *engaged* in the HR Processes and become an active agent on them: therefore, new HR IT Tools should be an enabler of this kind of approach.

Internal Processes – Quality

Along with operational efficiency – less redundant processes -, new HR IT Tools should focus on, ultimately, improving the internal processes running on HR Departments. Out of the implementation of new solutions, an increase on quality should be planned, measured and achievable, within the following dimensions:

- Accuracy: both the data *within* the applications, and the applications themselves should be as accurate as possible on dealing with HR Processes.
- Performance: applications should handle HR Processes in a *better* way – aligned with the operational efficiency, our empirical analysis suggest that the output of this efficiency increase is the feeling in the user's perspective on a *quality increase*.
- Client Satisfaction: User's satisfaction, in general, should be a strong focus on both designing and implementing new HR IT Tools: bottom line, users should g*et what they want,* and not what they are allowed to have. UX (User Experience) is a key element on the implementation of new IT Tools and can be a deal breaker on the adherence to

a new tool. Our empirical research delivered several times this kind of feedback, where stakeholders underlined that the new Recruitment tools was "finally" responding to the demands of the users.

Future Readiness - Flexibility

The final dimension on a successful implementation of a HR IT Tool is flexibility: to be able to be ready to the future, any IT solution needs to be flexible enough to be able to adapt in a fast way to a reality that, itself, is on a fast pacing change rhythm. Along with the rest of human society, both business in general and organizational dynamics in particular are experiencing increasingly fast changes on their characteristics, and any new HR IT solution should be able to be easily adapted to new customer requisites on two main flexibility dimensions: First, new HR IT Tools should enable a high level of operational flexibility, i.e., allowing effortless changes in the background processes that are using such HR IT Tools.

Furthermore, new applications should strive to enable functional flexibility, allowing that different and ever-changing stakeholders are involved within the HR Processes, by designing both flexible IT architecture schemas and flexible authorization concepts.

VII. CONCLUSION

The current paradigm of a digital economy and digital awareness has brought to everyone's attention to the automation of pretty much all dimensions of our life. Daily business operations are no exception, and with the digitalization of the economy and consequent rise of e-Businesses and e-Processes, came the challenge of the de-materialization of the working tools and mechanisms *within* the organizations.

Our focus was drawn around the Human Resources universe, and how could HR Information systems support and benefit with this "e-transformation" in a way that is aligned with the strategic human resources management ideals and goals.

From a historical point of view, to understand the current dynamics of the working place and of the Human Resources Management policies, it was necessary to review the birth of the very concept itself: from the early days of Personnel Management, where employees were seen as costs and therefor the management effort was similar to what would be expected on managing inventory: the focus was on controlling and monitoring associates, keeping the necessary information about them. With the 50's came the growingly acknowledgment that employees are motivated human beings and therefore Human Resources Management policies became to include and consider that employees had to be motived, either by intrinsic (non-material) or extrinsic (material) recognitions of their value to the company. Finally, since the mid 80's, it became clear that Human Resources Management would need to fit within a strategic planning to support the overall organization to achieve its goals, and therefore, from this point onwards, Human Resources policies were pretty much design across organizations focusing on *how* could HR support the employees to become a strategic partner to achieve the company's goals, thus transforming HR itself on a strategic partner.

Along with this transformation, from the 1970's onwards, electronic tools became to emerge to support Human Resources related tasks. Aligned with the contemporary point of view on human asset – and limited as well by the technology in place – the first electronic solutions targeted to HR were pretty much inventory modules for different elements within the scope of HR, like training or personal information (e.g. addresses, tax numbers..).

The development of further application had then its leap on the implementation of the so called ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning), an integrated solution that provided end-to-end control on key processes on managing an organization. So, naturally, the first area with sophisticated software to exist in HR was payroll.

After the dawn and widespread use of internet, and the development of programing technologies, more and more fields were possible to develop and new solutions were provided to all HR's specialty fields, from Recruiting to Personnel Development, either on premise or, from the last decade onwards, even cloud-based solutions.

So, from the start of 2000's and especially on this last decade, organizations are better served than never to have state of the art, fully efficient HR departments.

Organizations in general were keen to jump in in this new approach, buying in and digitalizing almost entirely their HR operations – there is hardly any business without an ERP solution used to take care of their HR related tasks, however, and quite surprisingly, there was no big analysis on what kind of advantages would this systems bring to the overall strategy for HR and for the whole organization. Pretty much in general, organizations based their decision making processes on implementing such solution on the premise that it would cut down on costs by increasing the efficiency of HR related tasks while automating part of them, bringing cost reduction to HR departments.

While being true, by their own, these arguments are not sufficient to support the theory that these implementations met their strategic goals. Some theory suggest that this kind of implementation might cut costs on HR personnel, while increasing costs to build an appropriate maintenance and support structure for those IT Tools.

The majority of theory built upon the search of the value creation upon the implementation of HR IT tools is convergent with this reality, by funneling the main benefits either on efficiency gains or cost reductions.

However, our belief was that, in this case, some more "hidden" dimensions were possible to outline, dimensions that could support as well, on a strategic level, HR Management policies. Our research found empirical research supporting value creation on five more different

dimensions (besides efficiency gains, already documented in the overall literature and found as well on documenting value increases on HR IT implementations):

Flexibility: By allowing agents within the organization to be both more flexible in *HR Processes,* and allowing the HR Structure to be more flexible within the organization;

Quality: Improvement was found to be happening after successful implementations, delivering especially increases on data accuracy, process enhancement, HR performance in general and, as a result, (internal) client's satisfaction, build upon the quality perception coming from HR operations.

Reachability and Employee Commitment (Organizational Engagement): Empirical evidence showed as well that in some cases, the output of a good HR IT Tools being implemented would be as well that the reachability to HR would increase and as well that it could support on bringing the user (the associate) *into* the HR processes, making the user a key stakeholder in the process as well. Both of these element were, therefore, contributing to *engage* the user with his HR organization.

Transparency: Successful implementations have increased as well the transparency within HR Processes, on two key dimensions: providing better *accountability* – the knowledge of who is responsible for each HR Process – and *Availability* – new HR IT tools fostered and increased the access that the normal associate had to the HR organization and therefore, HR operations decreased their "fuzzy" picture of HR operations in employees eyes.

Empowerment: One of the biggest selling points – yet without a comprehensive analysis on the benefit – of HR IT solutions is their strategic relevance for HR and overall operations. Evidence showed that, when well applied, HR IT systems are delivering as well strategic data to support decision making processes (e.g. headcount analysis), besides supporting the HR Transformation, by helping HR to steer away from redundant and non-efficient takes (such as data maintenance) and providing better tools for HR to become a strategical partner on strategic HR processes like Personnel Development.

Our proposal was to perform a qualitative analysis on a multinational organization – anonymized due to data privacy reasons - to test the adherence of the value creation dimensions listed above.

Key stakeholders (10) within the HR landscape in this organization were interviewed, in order to have a detailed content analysis on their statements using Bardin's analysis approach (1977).

It was possible to observe that a big part of the dimensions emerging from the existing theory were validated as well within our empirical research, what suggests the validity of these dimensions on which concerns value creation within e-HRM.

The biggest adherence within the different value creation dimensions was verified both on client satisfaction, with the highest number of mentions, flexibility – both functional and operational -, quality, specifically on the accuracy (data quality), transparency – both on HR's availability and accountability – and operational efficiency on HR Tasks.

On the other end, organizational engagement and quite interestingly, the financial efficiency, were the less adherent dimensions: while the first seems to be a secondary concern to the stakeholders, the latter might be due to the fact that a financial efficiency analysis is a requirement to such an HR IT Tool to be implemented in the first place, being this dimension something like an *implicit truth*.

The major challenges pointed out by the stakeholder's subject of our empirical research were both the complexity of both the system's interface and architecture, the ability from the organization to set up proper maintenance and support organizations to provide a continuous technical support for this tools, proper project planning (usually too focused on the implementation itself rather than the business requirements) and user adherence.

To frame the validated value creation dimension within a empirically supported decision making support tool, we suggested that Martinsons et al. (1999) approach built on the overall concept of Balanced Scorecard tool, developed by Kaplan & Norton (1996), that frames goal and measure definition on four steering pillars: Financial perspective – the goals should be financially viable and financially beneficial to the organization – Customer Perspective – they

should meet the requirements of the customer – Internal Processes Perspective – they should improve the internal procedures of an organization, thus making it more efficient – and Innovation Perspective – They should allow and instigate innovation on product design.

For that, our proposal is suggesting that HR IT implementation projects should be implemented *both* considering Martinsons et al. (1999) rationale *and* the empirically validated dimensions:

New HR IT tools should provide financial efficiency in general, and that should bring both financial and operational efficiency to HR tasks, as well as supporting the strategic relevance of HR (by providing insightful data analytics and steering HR into strategic tasks)

These solutions must be *customer-focused*, having a special focus on both engaging the users and providing transparency on HR operations;

Quality should be as well a strong focus on implementing such solutions, especially on providing both accurate HR data and improving the HR processes running on such tools;

In order to be ready to quick changes, inherent to innovation, HR IT Tools should have a special focus on allowing flexibility within HR tasks, both on an operational (processes) and functional (agents) level.

Our providing the above mentioned decision making support tool, is our goal to be a helping hand on enabling HR departments within the organizations to better invest on the appropriate HR IT Tools, those who will better suit the overall need that organizations have to design strategic human resources management policies and initiatives.

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ATTACHMENTS

ATTATCHMENT I - THEORETICAL OVERVIEW ON E-HRM LITERATURE

Value Output	Author(s)	Vakue (Rüel & Kaap, 2012)	Proposed Dimension	Proposed Category
Development of work forces	Sousa, 1999*	N/A	Flexibility	
Home office	Sousa, 1999*	N/A	Flexibility	
Value Output	Author(s)	Vakue (Rüel & Kaap, 2012)	Proposed Dimension	Proposed Category
Increases quality and pace	Bielsaki (2003)		Quality	
Improved learning process	(Shrivastava & Shaw, 2003		Quality	
Improvement on client satisfaction	Rüel et all, 2004		Quality	
Higher quaility services	Lawler (2005)		Quality	
Improve organizational learning	Cooke, 2006		Quality	
Improvement of work within HR Dpt	Travica (2008)		Quality	
Decrease of bad data quality	Bondarouk and Rüel (2009)		Quality	
Improvement of service delivery	Bondarouk and Rüel (2009)		Quality	

Improve talent management	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Quality	
Improvement of internal services for carrer management	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Quality	
Improvement of organizational performance (e-learning)	Holm (2010)		Quality	
Improvement of quality (e-learning)	Holm (2010)		Quality	
Improvement of organizational performance	Laumer and Eckhardt (2010)		Quality	
Improvement of quality (e-learning)	Laumer and Eckhardt (2010)		Quality	
Technical motives	Maatman et all, 2010		Quality	
Higher quaility services	Maatman et all, 2010		Quality	
Increasing on learner satisfaction (e-learning)	Mueller and Strohmeier (2010)		Quality	
Supports the overall education achievement (e-learning)	Mueller and Strohmeier (2010)		Quality	
Value Output	Author(s)	Vakue (Rüel & Kaap, 2012)	Proposed Dimension	Proposed Category
Employee with direct acess to HR Processes	Bielsaki (2003)		Org. Engagement	
Improved organizational climate	Bondarouk and Van Riemsdjik, 2004		Org. Engagement	
Increase on employee commitment	Bondarouk and Van Riemsdjik, 2005		Org. Engagement	

Value Output	Author(s)	Vakue (Rüel & Kaap, 2012)	Proposed Dimension	Proposed Category
Org. culture change	Jones et all, 2005		Org. Engagement	
Improved organization attraction (e-learning)	Holm (2010)		Org. Engagement	
Organizational motives	Maatman et all, 2010		Org. Engagement	
Minimizing resistance (e-learning)	Mueller and Strohmeier (2010)		Org. Engagement	
Value Output	Author(s)	Vakue (Rüel & Kaap, 2012)	Proposed Dimension	Proposed Category
Employee with direct acess to HR Processes	Bielsaki (2003)		Transparency	
Improvement on track and control of HR actions	Bondarouk and Rüel (2009)		Transparency	
			Transparency	
Online report activities	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Transparency	
Data acessability and availability(e-learning)	Holm (2010)		Transparency	
Overall HR Metrics for measuring HR Performance	Kavanaugh & Thite (2009)*	N/A	Transparency	
Value Output	Author(s)	Vakue (Rüel & Kaap, 2012)	Proposed Dimension	Proposed Category
Elimination of HR Transactional Costs	Rüel et all, 2004		Eficiency	
Increasing of the efficiency	Rüel et all, 2004		Eficiency	
			Eficiency	
Optimization of HR staff	Lawler (2005)		Eficiency	
Cost reduction	Lawler (2005)		Eficiency	
Time Saving (e-comunication)	Ramirez & Cantu (2008)		Eficiency	
Reduction of the process	Bondarouk and Rüel (2009)		Eficiency	

Increased speed on transactional activities in HR	Bondarouk and Rüel (2009)		Eficiency	
Increase of profitability, market share and size	Foster, 2009		Eficiency	
Reduction in costs	Foster, 2009		Eficiency	
Efficiency in operations	Foster, 2009		Eficiency	
Management productivity	Foster, 2009		Eficiency	
Reduction of adminstrative costs	Marler, 2009		Eficiency	
Elimination of HR Transactional Costs	Marler, 2009		Eficiency	
Automation of routine HR Tasks	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Eficiency	
More time to HR Staff	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Eficiency	
Delivery logic-cost effectiveness	Farndale et all, 2010		Eficiency	
More time to HR Staff	Farndale et all, 2010		Eficiency	
Cost reduction	Heikkila, 2010		Eficiency	
Administrative efficiency	Heikkila, 2010		Eficiency	
Reduced costs of communication (e-learning)	Holm (2010)		Eficiency	
Economical motives	Maatman et all, 2010		Eficiency	
Cost reduction	Marler & Fischer, 2010)		Eficiency	
Administrative efficiency	Marler & Fischer, 2010)		Eficiency	
Value Output	Author(s)	Vakue (Rüel & Kaap, 2012)	Proposed Dimension	Proposed Category

Improvement of HR Strategic orientation	Rüel et all, 2004		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Business change	Cooke, 2006		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Transformation to more strategic HR	Cooke, 2006		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Achieving organizational goals	Cooke, 2006		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Assisting for making strategic desisions	Bondarouk and Rüel (2009)		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Change of HR Tasks	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Strategic decision making	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Freeing HR Staff from administrative tasks	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Transformation of HR Professionals	Bondarouk and Rüel (2010)		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Professional Logic	Farndale et all, 2010		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Improvement of HR Strategic orientation	Heikkila, 2010		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Achieving organizational goals	Heikkila, 2010		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
Strategic Motives	Maatman et all, 2010		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
HR Business Partner	Ceriello, 1998	N/A	Enablement (Facilitaçao)	
E-HRM as empowerment of HRM strategic decision making	Marler & Parry (2015)		Enablement (Facilitaçao)	

ATTACHMENT II - INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Overall goal

This interview is part of the development of a Master Thesis with the following title:

"e-HRM: a case study on aligning a Strategic Human Resources Management and the development of Information Technologies".

This thesis aims to analyze the connections between HR Processes and the development of IT Tools designed for HR activities (i.e. HR IT Tools) and fully understand the way how they are both connected within the strategic Human Resources Management in your Organization and, as well, steering or influencing this very same strategic approach.

Descriptive data

Number of years working for the company:

Functional area:

Main Responsibilities:

First of all, thank you very much for allowing this opportunity to further understand the development the HR IT Strategy within your company.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

- Recruitment;

- Work Practices (e.g. flexible work practices);

- Decentralization of decision processes;

- Training Devolvement

- Employees Performance Evaluation

- Career Development;

- Benefits;

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

ATTACHMENT III - INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS – ENGLISH

The below interviews were all conducted in English, except subjects 1, 6 and 7. The original version of this interview can be found starting in page 157.

1 – Local HR Director – Lisbon (Portugal)

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: 22 years.

Q: Functional area:

A: I am responsible for HR Management for this company in Lisbon, and I've been working in this company for 22 years. I have not started immediately in HR, I started in Sales, more specifically Internal Sales support, and I did my degree in HR in the meanwhile, and started to work in HR 12 years ago. At the time, as a technician, now as the overall responsible for this topic. In the daily business operations, I am responsible for all the associates located here in Lisbon, and we manage three different legal entities here. One of them is operating our new HR Service.

At the moment, the challenges that we are facing come from the new HR Structure, implemented worldwide by this company, exactly by implementing new IT Tools that support all the processes, and that aim to centralize all information, worldwide, on what concerns associate information and management-relevant information, etc.

Also for Training and Development, the aim is that both training, performance and potential review, and the idea is to have this information available for all of the organization worldwide, or at least on those countries who already have this tools available to the managers. For themselves to have the information about their associates, online information, and standardized for all associates.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: The strategic concepts for HR are, at the moment, defined centrally by headquarters, in general terms, being this the tools that are provided, on each location, so that we can use them and operationalize the information in the best way possible.

Locally, what we are required to do, with such tools, made available by headquarters, together with the managers of each locations, and accordingly with the business goals that we have. Meaning, at this point of time, the role of the Local HR is very much focused on consulting, on a partnership with each one of the managers and with the goals set for each business unit, on providing the best associates, with the best skill-set, and more motivated, so that the daily business operations run successfully, and exactly for that, this new HR tools are essential to manage all of this information.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: At this point of time, we have started in Portugal a couple of years before, the implementation of this tools. I wouldn't say that we are in the implementation phase, we are beyond that, I think that now we are in the phase of better knowing this tools (by us, I mean HR and managers), because actually, in terms of data availability, the process is much easier. For example, we are doing the Performance Review this year, but we have available in this system, in the same way and for everybody, managers and associates, in this case we have a couple years' worth of information, since the start of this new project, but picture it, in a 5 or 10 year's period, we are going to be able to see the entire history of an associate, online, and before, the idea that I have as HR is that this kind of information was a little bit scattered.

We did them in paper at some point of time, after that, we had some tools, already online, which worked just fine but they weren't standardized across all locations in this company, for example in Portugal. For example, one associate in one of our plants, that went to work in Lisbon, required that the HR asked this information from the associates to the plant's HR department, and this is not needed anymore.

And, for example, It is good as well in what regards professional training, one of the focus that we have now is to invest on the Job Description, to make it transversal to all of the organization, regardless if the associate is working in Portugal, Germany or China. And that is very good. Makes everything more clear and transparent.

So I think that these tools, when they are fully running – because some of them are still being implemented – it will work really well, because all of the necessary information will be available.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: Yes, definitely, I think that it is a positive change.

Now, I think that the biggest obstacle that I see, is that all of section responsible people, all of the different managers, look at this new HR strategy as something good for them as well, because for example, with our new HR tools...for example, the performance review, is done once a year, the managers only used this tool a couple of times now, therefore I think that we all, as a group, have to develop the habit to use these tools, in order for them to become easy to use, user friendly.

On another angle, it is as well important that the managers see the importance of such tools and how can they use this in such a way that benefits their teams, as well because the information is there to be used and the company has invested heavily in them.

Q: This topic takes us to another one, which is the step that is lacking to achieve this full integration

A: Here, the question, in my opinion, has more to do with: before the implementation of these new HR IT Tools, at the HR Department, we would do everything for the managers and business units that we have in our location.

Now, with our new infrastructure, what we ask to all manager is that they are our Partners as well, when before they had a more passive role, and now, with the information being available, what we ask is that they have a more active role. And this is the mindset, that the role that we as HR should transmit to the managers, because before they would leave HR Management only in HR, and we have been working on changing this mind set, because, with these new tools available, they can have a much more active role and therefore they can see these new tools as an added-value to their business operations.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

Already mentioned;

Q: Work Practices (e.g. flexible work practices)?

A: Completely different. Not only in HR in general, in our organization, and I think that this is happening right now with the majority of the companies currently doing business. More and more, the daily business in the office is done via IT Tools like Skype, One Note, and everything else. And, therefore, this is a complementary demand on all of our associates.

All of us have to adapt to this new tools that, in general, in our day-to-day lives, not only on the professional environment.

However, what happens sometimes within this company is that… look that One Note for example, which is a great tool.

The information was conveyed, the concept behind it was explained, and then there's a link to the online training. And here is where, in my opinion, something is missing, because not everybody has the same curiosity, or the same skill set, neither the learning curve is the same for everybody. And I think that with these new tools, which are essential, that we deal with on a daily basis, this is missing a little, and going back to HR, it ended up missing a little bit more training and support, open sessions to clear any questions, that for some topics are planned but haven't been done yet.

Summing it up, these tools are very good, some more than others, no questions about that, but this information has to be sold very well in order that the users believe in them. And this is as well true to HR Tools. If we don't 'sell' this tools very well to our internal clients, they will never value them, so we must 'sell' them well, and for that, this kind of training support is as well necessary.

Only in this way this kind of things work. Same applies to HR IT. If all of us are failing to believe, each one on his role, HR, Managers, the associates themselves… and this happened, it was the biggest struggle, a couple of years ago, within the implementation of our new Time Management tools, there were a lot of struggle among associates… there is also, every time, this resistance to changes, but indeed it was not that easy to sell these new tools to the associates.

Long story short, users need to believe in the tools.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

A: I think that this kind of HR Management that puts the manager and the associate closer is the ideal situation. As HR, what we have to do is to make sure that we have the best associates, and the more skilled ones. The day-to-day business, in my opinion, has to be done between manager and associate, no questions on that. We should support in HR consulting, if any legal question is existing, and by supporting the necessary associate's development, together with the management, and that is precisely what these new platforms are doing, so this is an added value, without any questions.

Q: Training Devolvement?

A: Yes, I think that it is necessary to have this thing, that we are increasingly more requested, that HR is able to consult the management teams, and the associates themselves. The associate can also have the initiative to develop himself in a certain way. It is not something that has to come always from the manager, it can start with the associate. Therefore, from the consulting point of view, HR has still an important role to perform next to the teams. What this tools do is that they bring a solution that allows that the information is made available in a more standard and transparent way, either for the manager, for the HR, the information is there and can be viewed by any of us so there is more transparency on the processes themselves. It is needed that the users, at all levels, use the tools more. Because it is really a pity that the information is not used due to lack of knowledge or awareness. So this is why I was saying that it is very important to sell this tool in a good way, so that people believe and create the habit and interest to check and use our Performance Review tool, for example. To check the last performance review, which trainings were done already and those open to be done.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

Already discussed.

Q: Career Development?

Already discussed.

Q: Benefits;

A: It can be an added-value, but there's always the need for communication between Manager and HR. Because HR has the overview on the organization, and this is fundamental to keep.

Because each work group, each team, knows their team very well but we, as HR, have an holistic overview of the hole company, of the goals for each area, and a lot of times they intersect. The development of an associate happens between work areas. Therefore, I think that any decision that concerns to HR, has to go through HR. Even if just as an information, as I was saying, the managers today are already pretty much autonomous, and we, at HR, are not questioning their decisions, because usually they are business related, and they are the ones that know the business in detail, but it needs to be shared nonetheless with HR, for example

for us to track our internal equity index, that only us, with our HR overview, are able to provide. A salary raise for example, needs always to be validated with HR, because we are managing both the budget and the salary levels in the location. So this equity needs always to be assured by HR.

In this payroll topic, if the IT tools are getting better, more efficient, this is even better, but there's always the need for this topics to go through HR due to reasons I've just mentioned. It cannot be any other way.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: Facilitating, without any doubt.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: For me, all information related topics have to always exist as the basis for a decision making processes. Here, HR needs always to be present, because we are talking about people, personal relationships, therefore, what I see is that the added value within this applications is the support in the decision making process, management, but after that, the concrete evaluation, on the ground, has to have this personal and relational character as well, because we are talking about people and motivations. Therefore, I fully agree that this kind of tools are developed, they are essential for managing, to make a decision, to evaluate data, but the decision has to be made as well based on the people, and this is very important, and sometimes, what I see is that such tools are implemented, is that we are too focused on this tools and forget a little bit this relational part with the associates, and this cannot happen. We need to find here a balance.

2 – National HR Coordinator - China

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: 20 Years.

Q: Functional area:

A: So, my current role is HR Country responsible for this company in China. It has an associate volume on the scale of dozen thousand associates in different legal entities, different divisions, different businesses, and the HR roles that are directly under my scope is as well the HR Service, that you also now by your department, this is for Country scope. So it is about giving the guidance for the HR topics in China from a country view.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

A: I started in Controlling within this company, then I worked in Purchasing and now I am in HR. So I was this three functions. I changed divisions as well, and then I transferred for a corporate department, then I transferred to a consumer goods division and then to China. So different departments, divisions, and countries.

I appreciate the diversity of my roles, and I studied Economy (Master Degree).

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: Answered in the previous question.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: So, currently the HR-IT in China reports to me, so their report is to the HRS Head and he reports to me. So, if we talk about what is the strategy for HR IT, we have let's say a certain influence, we don't have an overall influence because it is guided from a central team, what

we bring in are our needs, I make it concrete what we need. The base is automation, standardization, and we are currently doing, if we are really pushing for automation, is that HR IT in China is faster that the company globally, that doesn't mean that we don't understand what others need, we are very satisfied with the Global HR Leader, in HR IT, but what we bring in is the need, the strategic need from the country and this what we see as our task. And also a role in the discussion and exchange on why we have them. Especially the areas of ESS / MSS (Employee and Manager Self Service) are big areas, on operative level**.** As well on the areas of predictive analytics, we have also seen a need and have the perception that talking on that topic is underrepresented, as well on our HR IT Team, which is very operative, not only on the Country team but as well on the global team, so currently the main focus of our resources is on day-to-day operative HR-IT topics and we are not shaping the future, but enduring the current excellence.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: Actually I have no clue on the evolution of the last 20 Years, because I have not worked in HR. What I definitely can say, from the time I know, is that HR was in the past one of the functions on which invested not a lot of money, so when I joined HR, the methods and tools were very old-fashioned. What I can see currently, and with the start of our Performance Review tool, it was the first big investment, in my view, in the HR IT function, if I look in the market, I still would evaluate our HR IT landscape, on a global level, as old-fashioned. So I can see different countries in Asia who still have no payroll system, but do it by paper, so to judge from a global level, I need to say of course that we are miles further that we have been on the past. If I compare to the outside market, we have a long way to go. And I don't say the perfect European systems, I really just mean systems that you can get from the market, plug and play, but currently… I need to say that I am not deeply involved to understand, in several areas, in parallel, what I need to say, with our Corporate Department our counterpart partner, if we have topics that are relevant, who can we talk and discuss, and she can explain as well, so that is a very good collaboration. So on the topic of the evolution, we are coming from centuries behind, and we are catching up.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

A: So, my current opinion is this: with our new Recruitment system, which is the new e-recruiting tool, I like this approach very much, because it was the first time when we decided to take the best tool in the market, for staffing, and to go for that tool. I am completely convinced that this is the right approach for us as a company, to not put our investment in areas on which we are not the best in the market. So in this areas, I would say "plug and play", buy from the market, like other functions and areas do as well.

I am far away to be capable to judge in which areas this is possible and which not, on our current organization setup I definitely see, like I said, from a global and on the country level, we focus mainly on operational excellence, means, we just do a bit of evolution but not revolution. And this new recruitment tool was for me the revolution, currently we are on the evolution part. And if you ask the question, can we have a new Performance Review situation? I think it is not a good idea just to smile about that, from the criticism that we get from business, I think it is a good idea to have a look on it. Definitely, this is something were all in HR need to help together to have a look on it. And I don't know if this a current activity. For the country level, what we listen now is that this not the current focus.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: I need to say that I believe that, on a global level, whenever we talk about delivering a service or a product, if you have a user, you always need to focus on the user. Because this is the global business model in all business and services. The question that needs to be asked internally for each and every topic, sometimes it can be that we decide to go for a global approach were we don't delight the user, but maybe have a different reason for that.

For example: leader topic. So, even if a user would be happier with no time records, all around the world, in some areas around the world, it is law, so we need to do that, so I would not say that is this or that way, I believe that is always smart to have a look. If it is a good idea to fulfill the user's need. And I would say, in most of the cases, it is, but there are maybe 10%, where

we have different reasons maybe budget, maybe legal reasons, not to go for that approach. But I am also quite sure that if we wait, the world will show us that is possible, and then, just jump on it and buy it. So, I believe that the world will, whenever we have something that we forbid, there will be somewhere around the world someone who will find a solution, and again, I don't talk about legal topics.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

Already discussed.

Q: Work Practices (e.g. flexible work practices)?

Already discussed.

Q: Training Devolvement?

A: So, we don't work in the learning area of the Performance Review tool, we checked and we have different online channels in China. Because, for us, and this is what I say, this is global, and for us completely old-fashioned already. So, again, now, as I represent China, I don't know what the past has involved, because at this time I didn't worked within HR, I know that as an associate it was comfortable to have it already online, and I just can say what we have currently, not what we had in China. Due to the fact that this was already, no one will use that. This is valid for the Learning area, but you had two more processes?

Q: Career Development? Employees Performance Evaluation?

A: I like it very much that we have the applicable forms now online, and that we can route the form, which is very good.

Q: In which dimensions is this making you say that it is good?

A: So, for me, this is just a standard in digitalization. Now, you can say all attributes are used. Are attributes you can find on the topic on what can be digitalized, will be digitalized, and

why? Because is faster, is more transparent, it gives the possibility to evaluate data in a different form, so whatever we have done, we are following the market of digitalization. In every form.

Q: Benefits?

A: This is different. What I need to say, especially in the area of payroll and benefits, it is so beneficial that we don't have what I heard from a lot of people, an old paper book because I think really, with the system, you also can ensure more compliance. And I think this is very beneficial for a company. So this is an additional topic, to the other topic.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: Definitely facilitating. Not complicating. I think it is very normal that if you change topics, or if you digitalize topics, we need to adapt, but for me it is not getting more complicated, it is getting easier. It is working on.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: It will definitely be a growing topic, because it is like we see in all functions, that digitalization and connectivity play a major role, this is very obvious, and this also will be a topic on the HR function, all over IT is supporting now. The content needs to come from us as a function, but it is a mixture of both to support our HR area.

3 - Head of Global M&S for HR-IT

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: Yeah, now I must count… (Laughs) I started in 1984, means, I am now more than 33 years at this company.

Q: Functional area:

A: I am responsible for Maintenance and Support of our Global HR Systems.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

A: Perhaps you can give some hints, is it regarding team leading or technical perspective?

Q: Leadership topics that are applicable to your department.

A: My current focus is to establish an overall concept for our on premise applications in a very good and near cooperation between corporate, HR IT and IT Support Groups, to improve the customer satisfaction, to make the support processes more effective and to give the team members motivation to improve the quality and the speed of the support process by their own ideas.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: I started with software engineering during my studies and in my first position. So I am a software guy I will say. And that leads me to software development and from software development in the IT organization from this company, and with IT knowledge I saw that there were two main topics which lead me to HR IT. It was a very good IT network knowledge at this company and it was my (in parallel) network in the HR community. During the time that I was in the IT organization I was involved in some HR topics, with the Worker's Council specially, and so in parallel to my network in the company's IT, I built up a network with the HR community and then in 2004 there was a big need in the HR community to get IT competences and they knew me, they knew that I was an IT guy and so I got the offer and joined the department, switching from IT to HR. Built up my IT competences in HR

applications and (I will be honest) I all the time, not only on the HR community but before in the IT community I was always support-minded, I had experience on projects, I led projects, but I was always aware that we need a stable and good quality in maintained and support. So it fitted very well to me with my IT network, with my HR network and my HR affinity and my priority for maintenance and support and so my current position fits, I would say.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: Yes, the strategy of HR is a bit far away from the normal maintenance and support business, so I would say that when you see it from very high level, you'll say ok we need satisfied customers, we need efficient and good processes, then I would say ok, it fits. But there's executive manager saying: "Ok, maintenance and support on premise, this is our goal for the next year". It is a very hidden task [Maintenance and Support], I would say that if this support will go down, we will have a bad problem, but this is not a marketing topic, to say on a HR conference we make Maintenance and Support stronger or so on, is a need, everybody wants it – a bit similar to payroll, you know, the payroll runs all the months, you need the Money, if it fails, if in the end of the month more than 100.000 people in our country don't get the Money at the end of the month, it will be catastrophic, it will be headlines in newspapers, but no one says every month "good job" (laughs) and this is the reality you must live when you do maintenance and support.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: Ok, I would try an answer: When I started with IT at this company, it was at the end of 1980's. IT was much separated and it was related to special occasions, there was really no common IT. Not in the country, and absolutely not in the world. At this time, there was no global view at this company. And then, mid of 1990's, there was a decision at this company to go forward with ERP based applications and at this time it was absolutely focused on finance and enterprise relationship systems, but not on HR systems. So, when it began, I would say in 1995, there was a focus on IT but not on HR IT. HR was a closed shop, and it was not very good, focuses on payroll and that's all. So we got a stagnation with this HR applications

and there was no requester, no leading person saying: "Ok, we need to improve this applications. This was the first point, the other one was that there were no awareness on out top management that here was the need for improvement. So I would say that over 5 to 7 years there was no improvement on HR IT. And then, the pressure was very big on that something has to be done and like life, this is like a pendulum: if one end is pushed too hard, it hard to the pendulum to be stable at the middle: So it is difficult to focus on the first point, the right way, sometimes you go in another way, but this other way is not the best way to do it. And it was the same with HR applications, we had the need to do something but we made projects and tried to implement them without a stable and good architecture and we spent time and Money and resources on the first step until we came to the right way with our architecture on the HR applications. That is the point, so I would say that this is the lesson learned, looking back 20 years, if you have a good strategy in the first time and the strategy is not when the pressure is high, more when you have the vision of which is the right way, then you can Schedule it carefully, without pressure, and then you have not so much failures, do not create as much risks and in that way, is always better to stop at 80%, not to try to do everything and to differentiate what is necessary and what is not – Saying: ok, do we really need this, do we want to make it central or global, or perhaps we say: ok some country might use it but we don't take it on our global agenda. So, I would say that there was a lot of lessons learned and when we compare with this other situations, I think we are in a good way with our HR IT, but we cannot say: "We are the best" or "We do it the best, we have nothing to improve", in the future, and this is very special for this company, we are, from our structure, unique, and not comparable with other companies. So there is no benchmark, but we decide by our own what we need, what is good for us and some things might be necessary to do for us which are not necessary for other companies.

So I would say that, going through this 20 years, we need to reduce our complexity, and processes because HR IT should support processes, and when the processes are complex, IT gets as well complex, the Maintenance and Support grow up, but the quality goes down, so we need to reduce the complexity of our processes and requests, it is very difficult but it must be the goal for the next years, to get a stable but flexible IT.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: I will say, on the Recruitment Process, there was a very big change on the last 10 years, I would say. With internet, and with apps on mobile phones, Facebook and other social media am so on, it became absolutely necessary to implement the right IT for recruiting: we needed to have more flexibility in this topic and we are driven from the market. In payroll we can say ok this is my payroll, it is only necessary to fulfill legal requirements, but here is a marketing topic and we must be on the top level of the market in comparison to other companies, otherwise we will not get new colleagues, everyone will say that the recruitment tool from this company is not easy to use, is bad and so on, so here we have a big impact between IT and processes and in this case is absolutely necessary. I think that recruiting process has improved absolutely, when I think about the first time, when I requested new colleagues, more than 20 years ago, I had to go to the HR Department, they had to check paper, and it had much more effort, and took much more time to get choices for interviews, and now I can see it on my screen and can decide in a few minutes if it is good or bad, so on this case it had a big influence on this process. Time Management has improved, not so big when compared with recruiting, but the improvement in Time Management was as well involved with Shared Services and so on, meaning that the communication in this process is a lot better, we don't need any more paper to sign, the communication is improved, so IT was improved as well.

Regarding the processes on our Career Development tool, I am not very much involved, an honestly, as a manager, I don't see here really big changes, because it is not a process when a manager is involved every day or every month. It happens once or twice a year, and in this topic it is much more important to speak together, to speak to the HR Business Partner, it is not. But this is honestly my point of view, other managers and HR Business Partners can have

other view, but for me, here is absolutely necessary to have a look on the soft side, to talk to each other, and the documentation, that is for me the last 10%, but not the key topic in this process. In Training Management, yes, we had a Training Management tool in the past, it was normal software evolution. This process, for me, was like Purchasing – I had a catalogue and I would purchase trainings. It is now much better, a better interface, with better reporting, and specially this reporting was improved, so is becomes better for the manager and that the self-service dimension of this process is improved with the Training Management tool, it is not anymore a purchasing tool, it is a planning tool, a review tool, so I would say that the impact on the process was good and it was the wright way to go.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

- Recruitment;

- Work Practices (e.g. flexible work practices);

- Decentralization of decision processes;

- Training Devolvement

- Employees Performance Evaluation

- Career Development;

- Benefits;

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: I would say that if we had implemented everything in the wright way, the processes would be facilitated. And some processes are indeed facilitated. But I think it is a human that if you have the opportunity to improve processes with IT, there is sometimes no pressure to simplify the process. With IT, I can make additional features, add more than one variant in this process and so on, and so there is a failure within some IT implementations that don't focus only on

facilitation of the process, on the other side you say, ok, we have more complexity, so it is both, to make it more complex, from my personal point of view, it is too huge in our processes, this must be reduced, there we have a need and a very big potential to reduce our complexity and more to focus on facilitation

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: It is a growing topic, not only in HR, but in the overall company, and the business strategy, and we must see it differently. There are the classical HR Processes, that HR-driven, to make recruiting as an example, or to make predictive analytics, for example, these are the main HR Goals. But the IT, HR comes as some 30% of what drives HR IT. The other part is driven from Data Security, Organizational Changes, and these are more general topics, regarding the organization, not specific HR processes, and when I have a look on our workload, I would say that we cannot say that HR IT goals are not only aligned with HR Goals and Strategy, more than 50% is driven by other topics and that we are dealing with multiple goals is very important because only there is awareness by the top management we can do a good job, because this awareness is necessary, when it is coming a huge workload IT driven and not HR driven.

4 – WW Head for HR IT

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: 39 Years.

Q: Functional area:

A: I started, made an education at this company, then I started in the Personnel Department, sixteen years, then I was in the IT department, then I was in the corporate function for Pension and related Benefits, and I was project leader for the HR Service Project, and then I took over the global role and since 4 years I am responsible for the global HR IT role, and the Project Leader for HR Transformation Project.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

A: At the moment? HR and IT. It is a combination. I am located in HR, so it is more related to HR.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: Yes, I was in both areas located, I was on HR but also on IT. And so… it fits perfect to my role now. I was pure HR, I was pure IT, and now I have the combination HR IT.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: At the beginning, HR IT in a starting phase was only working online, making working online possible in each country. Then it came a change, and it was more or less thinking global, and that means that we needed to define standards to make it possible to have a global IT. And at the beginning, the global processes, the processes were designed and then, the IT had to

make the processes alive. And the change 5 years ago, is now, use ready IT, and try to bring your processes into IT. So, at the beginning it was only using IT in the country, then the next topic was to think global, but define processes and bring the processes one-to-one into IT, and now it is totally new, buy a ready IT, and bring your processes into the IT. It was IT follows the process, and now it is process follows IT. This is a big change.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

A: I think the value of HR IT on the last 5 years increased extremely. No process, you cannot think about one process anymore without IT. So the lead for IT increased very much. But, on the other hand, the companies are not open enough to invest enough money for HR IT. So, you have to argue all HR IT related topics with the benefit, and sometimes it brings benefits not just in costs. Sometimes it brings benefits on usability, acceptance, and so on. But the companies have only cost issues in focus. And so, to be very honest, I think we should invest more that we do at the moment.

Q: One way could be for example to try to have new measures on how can something be beneficial, besides costs.

A: Yes, not only costs, we should have additional measure points, or mile stones.

Q: Do you think that this would leverage HR IT?

A: It can, but what is also very important is that the change, to bring the user to the center. At the beginning, in HR, we always thought only about how to optimize HR processes, and now the focus is more how to get the most acceptance from the user. This is also a very big change, at the beginning nobody thought about the user, so, but now, everybody has to work with this system, one step back, at the beginning, only HR worked with IT, and now, employees work also with the IT and now you have to change the mindset and you have to have an acceptance from the user. And this we have to learn. But, IT is the second step, first of all, the processes owners and the process designers have to think: do we really need these processes? In a way like we designed it in the past. Maybe some processes we do not need anymore, so for this you

don't need any IT, or maybe somethings you need which you never thought about for example gamification or something like this. We need something like this.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: I think it is absolutely needed and most of the cases, we wouldn't be able to deal with payroll without IT. So, at the moment, I would say, 50% of the processes are within IT, and in future I would say 90% would run in IT. Not only, but you still have a conversation and discussions, but most of the issues will run within IT. On HR IT.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

A: So, why did we chose the current recruitment solution? It is…is… we worked with a different approach. When we started with the old one, we reduced the workload for HR, and made the recruiting process more transparent. For this new one, the idea was: candidate first, make the system as most attractive as possible for the candidate, because to find talent is so hard, that if the people, the candidates don't accept the tool, when doing the application, you have no chance. So, the clear statement was: Candidate First. Make it as easy as possible, as nice as possible for the candidate. With the optimization and transparency as well, but the candidate was the first selection.

Q: This is coming a little bit into the topic that you've mentioned about User Experience.

A: Yes, but for Recruiting, it was not every user, we had a clear statement, first the candidate, second the hiring manager and third HR. And in the past, we always said: first HR, second hiring manager and third candidate. And so this is the big change.

Q: Do you think that besides recruiting this approach can be beneficial on engaging different stakeholders, in general?

A: It depends on the topic. In some topics, UX [User Experience] you require that the user does not come first, because the payroll has to be stable, and has to be as stable as possible. And, so, this is not a question, of course asking the user, of course, every user wants to have a correct payroll, so, in some topics you need clear standards, and this is the best way for the user as well for the company. Make it cost efficient, make it stable, and so on. And other topics, for example flexible benefits, there will be a change, at the moment, the company says: This a benefit and you have to take it, in future, this topic of flexibility is increasing. So, this will be a change, but not everywhere. In some cases, you have to stable and standardize, and in other cases you have to be flexible. And this is the new thinking in HR IT, not only in HR IT, I think in all IT landscapes, but also in HR, you need to find out in what areas do you need stable and standardization, and what parts do you need flexibility. You have to combine both in a perfect way. In some cases you have so many legal and mandatory topics, like Workers Council, that it is difficult to make it user friendly.

Q: Work Practices?

Not answered.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

Not answered.

Q: Training Devolvement?

A: So, the Personal Development Processes, are designed in a way, I would say, old fashioned, and we learned in bringing the IT tool alive, that the tool alive, that is not sufficient anymore. Not everything. So, the rollout of the IT Tools helped to make it very transparent what is ongoing in the whole company world, but in the other hand it shows very clearly that our Processes don't fit into the time anymore. Some of the processes. So, I see how on the forms, one side it can give transparency, and also to bring some problems to the surface. For example, master data quality. Without IT, nobody would be aware that we have problems regarding data quality, in that case, but we measure it in different ways, because there is no clear master data available. There wasn't. Now, everybody has to maintain it in the same way, and have to count in the same way. So the transparency quality is increased very much because of IT.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

Already answered on previous question.

Q: Career Development?

Already answered on previous question.

Q: Benefits?

Not answered.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: Facilitating. To say it very clearly, I think it helps the processes to make it simpler. And as well clearer and with increased transparency.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: Increasing of course, and in all areas, especially at this company, for example, two years ago, IT was not part of the highest decision board that HR Council. Since two years, HR IT, so me at the moment, is part of this decision board. In the development of the HR strategy, I am involved from the early beginning, and in the past this was not the case. So, the role of IT is increasing, and especially for strategic issues, for example, very simple example, when the company plans to have one more location, anywhere on the world, they can use now IT to find out what is the best fitting place because the people are there. For example, it is also IT related. Or for example candidate searching or finding out where are the best skills. If I want to plan a new project, that I need a very special set of skills, if I have it within the IT, it is very simple to find people. At the moment, you have to make advertising to the project and ask people how wants to join, in the future, we can select the people and ask them concretely, you have the right skills, are you interested?

Q: How do you see the mutual influence of HR Strategy and HR IT strategy? Who is steering who?

A: I think that it is still the case that HR Strategy is steering HR IT strategy.

Q: Do you think that this is the right approach?

A: I do think this is the right approach. The technical part should be an enabler, and not a policy maker. I think IT is for enabling, for supporting and enabling, but the strategy shouldn't be done regarding IT, the IT should be related to the HR Strategy.

5 – HR Transformation Project Lead

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: Nearly 31

Q: Functional area:

A: I was in Operational HR for nearly 26 years, in different roles, last role was this divisional HR, and since mid of 2013 I'm in the role of Project Head for HR Transformation, it was a Transformation project touching organization of HR, Processes in HR and IT Landscape in HR. And, at the same time, I am in charge for Global Steering and Controlling of the HR organization, or which you could translate into Strategy Development in the department of HR.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

A: Answered in previous question.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: The idea behind for this transformation project is to reorganize HR, to become more efficient, more up to date, change roles, so that the contribute for the business excellence is bigger than before and for that understanding how operational HR works, what is that the business requires from HR, I think is a very important topic, and obviously, I was in my different roles, and mainly in my last role, divisional HR, kind of performing HR in the way that we are trying to introduce it in the project. I think that was one of the reasons why I was asked to take over the project lead.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: Answered in previous question.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: When we started HR IT, it was at least kind of standard landscape, there was a solution for payroll and there was a solution for maybe Org. Management, but it was mainly focused on the country where it was applied. So, there was no possibility to have a clear overview on people data, there was no really way to thing about synergies within systems, there was no global steering of the HR IT Landscape. And the last 10 years, mainly starting in 2010, the department responsible for that started, with IT, started to develop an integrated HR IT landscape, taking over the governance and the ownership for that, with an worldwide scope, and only that enabled at least the organization to build on that and to present an IT solution for a lot of the HR Core Processes like Performance and Talent Review processes, which was kind of standardized already in the past, but done on paper, and when we tried to make it available in IT, to make it available all over the world with the same appearance, we found out that although it was standardized in paper, there were different applications being used, everybody thought: ok I should do it a little better than the standard, adding something here, or getting rid of something there, and, so there was no real standard, so we identified the opportunity to really set up standards, put them up in IT, and roll them out in a worldwide basis, and with that we now have a standard, around the world. What is happening now, interestingly, is that the organization is changing again and a lot of standards we are having today, in the HR IT systems for example, or in HR Processes, which are then mirrored in HR IT Systems, are no more applicable for the entire company community, because the organizational modules people are working in are changing. We are more and more an agile organization and the standard Performance Review, conducted once a year by the superior, is no longer applicable, in an totally agile organization, because there is no… feedback on performance for example, which is normally given from the superior to the employee, there often takes place from a costumer perspective, less from the superior, and if we think forward, then maybe in short term they will even have no superior anymore. And with that, Performance Review in the classical form as we've standardized all across the world will no longer applicable for everyone. Which was two, three years ago.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

A: This was just an example, but if we stick to that, there will be, changes will happen, furthermore, that we cannot predict today, this is something I think which is part of our reality right now, difficult to predict things, because things are not developing evolutionary, but disruptively, and yes we will have from my point of view, as far as I dare to predict, we will have certain areas where we will have the "classical organizations" , within the next 10 years maybe, and on the other side, or at the same time, we will have more agile organizations. So we need to prepare at least different sets of business models, or different business organizations, so that performance management is one example, we are more and more… we have to get rid of the idea that one size or one standard fits all. This is no more applicable. This is the only thing that is absolutely clear.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: So, if I had to draw the bigger picture, in the past it was at least single solutions for single applications, on national level. Then we had integrated HR IT landscape where data is exchanged, data is available at a global level and synergies can be gained. And there is a certain guidance and governance on what HR IT systems are implemented. In the near future, I think we will have, we still need to have IT Systems which are talking with each other, exchanging data, having all the employees of the company on one data "lake", let's say, at the end of the day, because only that will allow us to think of an more advance way of analytics. To predict, for example, issues that will come up on the future. Learning from the past, identifying patterns and apply those patterns on the existing staff we have in this company and predict if people will leave or will people reduce their engagement, etc. And now the question is: a) we still need this data base, so we will still need integrated HR IT Landscape? That will be different to today is that there will be a lot of mobile applications, which then calls to the necessity to allow people with non-company managed devices to enter HR Processes from their private mobile, for example, second we will have different application for the same purpose, that refers to those different business models, we were talking already. So performance management, to

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keep to our example, will be different from the classical world to an agile world, and we need to provide as much as possible IT solutions as well. And the third thing I see is the topic of Costumer Experience, which in the past was not the focus. When I came to HR Processes and HR IT applications, the topic of costumer experience has to have a much bigger impact, or has to be at least the center from where we are starting to design HR Processes and HR IT applications.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

A: The feedback from the market and as well the successes we achieved so far was about to candidates in the pipeline, speed and so on so the new recruitment tool was…we did the right thing. But here, again, the question is how long do we exactly have this application of the recruiting system in place, and that we make sure that we constantly adapt to the market needs and to the candidate's needs, in this case, because they might change quickly. And we need to really monitor what is going on the market and maybe adapt the system. Just to keep us ahead, or keep us on the upper level of recruiting systems of the market.

Q: Work Practices?

Not answered.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

What I see and what I recognize every year is that a lot of Ideas out there, that we could realize and that we could help the business to become more efficient. But, at the same time, we have a strictly limited budget, which does not allow us, at the end of the day, to change our systems much more than the legal requirements which are necessary to implement to stay compliant. So there is a lot of potential, aligned on the street that we cannot pick up, due to missing budget. And I would say another sentence to that, for me the question is how to run our digital transformation, of this company, when we are not investing into IT in the way that is probably needed. On the other hand, it is clear from the company's perspective I need to steer my

investment into IT, so it is less about the central approval process, it is more about the allocation of budget from a company into digital transformation.

Q: How do you see this investment? Its evolution?

A: No. Not in HR, I have to admit. There was a big step, maybe 10 years ago, but since then, we are at least at a similar level on what it comes to IT budget.

On the project that I am leading, we got an approval, for extra budget, it was tremendous, but since that is now implemented, we are at least maintaining much lower level of investment, which mainly serves the purpose, as I've said, to implement legal changes.

Q: Training Devolvement?

Already discussed.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

Already discussed.

Q: Career Development?

Already discussed.

Q: Benefits?

Not answered.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: For the time being, it is facilitating, for the future it is… I wouldn't say complicating, but limiting.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: So, first of all I would say, the HR IT Strategy should do two things: In general, follow the HR Strategy, and realizing it as good as possible, and in the other hand, delivering input on opportunities for optimizing HR or setting up very forward oriented HR Strategy. So, what we

might have had in the past is that HR Strategy and HR Strategy lived in parallel worlds. Which is no more feasible for the future. Both need to be completely aligned. Yes. This is the general claim. And exactly that applies for all companies here that we have to have a clear HR IT Strategy which realizes topics or action fields, important focal points, from the HR Strategy. In particular, I think it is difficult to say more, maybe only that with the differentiation, IT is responsible for budget, and it is steered by someone else, when it comes to the management board that HR is managed by. This mismatch is kind of, put into the organizational reality. But, if we look at other function, this is the same probably for a lot of functions, which are not reporting to the same executive manager, so this is not a single fate of HR, but something which is a reality in the whole company.

6 – National HR Coordinator – Portugal (1)

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: 3, 5 years.

Q: Functional area:

My functional area is described as HR Technician for Projects and Processes;

Q: Main Responsibilities:

At this moment, these are both managing and operationalizing expatriates processes, managing HR Processes, being, coordination the continuous improvement of these processes together with the Local HR's, the Personnel Marketing area as well, and, by inheritance, everything which is connected with the employer branding of the company, and as well some support to some HR IT Tools, more within a local scope, or supporting any change request for the existing HR IT Tools.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: I started here as an intern, and back then I join this company to support the HR Restructuration Project, that was a project of a very big scale at this company worldwide, and also in Portugal, and it was then that I started to be more in touch with HR IT, because during that project, I was responsible by the specification requirements for our Request Tool, that is the tool that we are currently using to generate tickets, i.e., doing the communication between local HR departments and the Services that do their data processing, so I would say that was my first big step and the one who led me onto this path. Having this project finished, along with my part with the Request Tool, I was more focused on both the description and optimization of all HR Processes, this due to the way that communication was being handled between all HR areas, besides, new HR Structures were created, not existing until then, the HR Services, and it was created as well a new form of communication between local departments and those very same services, and therefore all of these sparked a big change and

optimization in all HR Processes, therefore, this was wat I focused on, in practical terms, working as a HR Country, focusing a big effort on describing and optimizing the HR Processes, which until this day are being used and the process folders on which they are stored are the cornerstone of the working method between Local HR's and the HR Services, and then, from there, I naturally evolved to other areas under the scope of National HR responsibility, besides HR Processes, such as expatriate management and personnel marketing.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: At this point in time, I feel that it is not completely aligned, due to the fact that I have already delegated some of my responsibilities within HR IT during the project, that were then taken over by different colleagues in this organization, i.e., in this case for example the responsibility over the Request Tool was taken over by the colleagues in the Services, even my responsibilities with the ESS/MSS application, at Country HR we only have left the governance of a local tool that we've designed to control leaving processes, and even this is shared as well with colleagues from the HR Services. Therefore, I am not sure if my job is, or not, connected with HR IT. But rather to other topics.

Q: Do you think that both should be aligned?

A: Yes, I do think so. Why? Because we you let go the responsibility of these applications to the Services, they will naturally focus very much on highly technical topics, and I think that the National HR part can have a more broad overview, from both a technical perspective, needed to the Services, and from a strategic point of view, needed from the Local HR Departments, and what I feel right now is that the HR Business Partners' complain a lot and have a lot of problems with the complexity of the IT Tools and that may of the times the answer given is that it has to be that way, because is not possible to do it in any other way, technically, or it takes too much time, or that it is too expensive to do it in any other way, therefore, having this kind of responsibility in the HR Services, they are always pull a little bit to the technical side, missing a little focus on what HR demands from HR IT: That its existence facilitates HR processes, rather than complicating. I think that we at HR Country can have both sides in out

landscape, what can be technically implemented and what we should make sure that works according to HR Business processes.

Even to us, sometimes I try to help him in understanding which are the authorizations that he needs, but even that I cannot know, we have too many persons in the processes, we have the IT Partner, the Identity Manager... i.e. , the complexity is so big that I feel that nobody can state what someone is doing. It is very complex. Even booking lunch, he cannot do yet.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: Yes, for example, I think that some tools were really necessary, and I had a very good example. Here in my location, , when I first joined, payroll would still be done almost manually, it was really something dreadful, and taking this into consideration, I think it made a lot of sense to choose to proceed with the next step and the system implementation and to improve to a system such our current ERP solution.. But here we have already a problem, even though the provider is very good, undeniably, very robust, it is as well too heavy and very inflexible.

And we are talking about a reality where we have, within the same country, different collective work contracts, different payroll rules, and it is not always easy to adapt them into the system.

In other words, from one side I think we are walking in the right track, by trying to… I wouldn't say automate, but use more sophisticated tools, but from the other side, we are still on a very early stage, a phase of adaptation and continuous improvement, even due to the fact that there are still a lot of processing errors and situations where to correct something, you end up mess another one, and therefore even talking about our ERP provider, what is essential to us – I think that we are still not completely stable, but in my opinion it was an essential point.

Regarding other tools such as ESS/MSS, I think it makes a lot of sense that we walk in that direction, in other words, that the associate itself can see their time management, clock ins, absences, etc, and that the managers have access as well to check the situation of their teams, but, similar to our ERP, I think that there is still a lot to do regarding ESS, especially on the manager's point of view, a lot of reports are not working correctly, and often the reply that we get is that " Ok, we do the Change Request for this reports, but it takes a lot of time to be

analyzed and created", after that it takes a long time to be tested as well, and after when a change is made, they end up changing something else as well, so you have two things to test, therefore, there is a lot of room for improvement. But I think that the company in these two aspects is going in the wright way.

For me, what doesn't make much sense, and I think this is something that we are going to realize, in my perspective, , that was an error , is that the Request Tool, or at least the way that processes are designed with the Request Tool .

Why? Because we have two services, one in each location, that is getting indications from HR Business Partners at each location, and that need to receive all the administrative details, at an exhausting level, to be able to maintain them in the system, but the concept that we were sold in the project phase was that the HR Business Partners would be having more free time, that was being done at the location at that moment, so that they could focus more on the strategic part of their job, meaning, advising the managers, to be able to predict organization changes at a structural level and prepare the departments accordingly, provide all the necessary support on both recruiting and selecting new associates, developing the ones already in the company, etc.

What is happening is that I think an essential point was forgotten: on the previous organization, we had the so called assistants, on the location sites, and they were people with a lot of time working for the company, a lot of experience, and that new exactly, for each kind of process, which kind of information should be maintained in the system, so HR Business Partners… I will talk a concrete example, on a hiring, the HR Business Partner, did not had to say to the assistant which is the CNP/CPP partition, which is the professional category, which is the specific code for the Unique Report, the HR Business Partner had only to say: "Look, Mr. Manuel is joining the company on day x, is having the job of Hardware Developer I, at the department ENG, and then the assistants had a hole expertise and experience that would allow them to know that the job would be fitting with the professional category x, that requires this and that information. And this is it, I think that when the Services were implemented, this topic of local know how a little was bit forgotten, two new services were created, with people completely new to the organization, a lot of them with little work experience, we know that a big part of the recruitment was based on newly graduated, and that, therefore, these people

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would not be able to maintain data in the system, without them to be given to them by 100%, through the so called ticket, from the HR Business Partners side.

In practical terms, what is happening, is that the HR Business Partner, or the assistant, have to insert all of the data, if not 100%, they are plus than 90%, to either a hiring action, or a transfer, a leaving action, etc., the HR Business Partner or the assistant have to give all of these data, it has to type in all of this data, to the Service to be able to collect them and to maintain them in our ERP system, which means, in reality we are having an unnecessary duplication of work, that is unnecessary, at least for Portugal. I think that the Service for other countries might have some advantages that ours does not have, and therefore, in my opinion, our Request Tool should have been thought in a different way, is there already happening a central project that is walking into that direction, by trying to standardize some of the fields in the Request Tool that, after being filled by the HR Business Partner, can be automatically transported to our ERP System, without the need to be validated or copied by the Service, so it becoming clear that in some data fields there is no advantage in having two people writing the same data, but for me this is not solving the problem anyway, because the problem remains in the fact that either the HR Business Partner or the assistant, that have to provide this information, when maybe the optimized logic of this, as it is already happening some countries, is that the own Service can take over some of the processes, for example expatriate management, where the HR Business Partner only indicates that the process starts and it is processed in a certain way, and the Service itself is the one responsible to contact either the associate or the manager, to collect the required data, and put it in the system. For me, that would make more sense.

And in this way, the Request Tool would be more of a communication tool, a simpler one, and saying: Person with personnel number x, will have the action day y. And based on this information, the service would collect all the different needed data with managers, associate… every stakeholder involved, basically, and maintaining this data in the ERP system.

But this would implicate as well that a lot more autonomy would be given, and a lot more responsibility to the jobs that are currently being handled by the Service. This would be the same as making a copy of the old situation, where the HRL itself had one team, that was the data team, let's put it like this, and it would be this team that would collect all of the required data, to maintain it in the local system, so the idea was the same, the HR Business partner

would only say that either a Hiring, Leaving or Transfer was happening, of person x, on date y, and this team would collect this data by reaching to all parties involved.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

A: I think that you have just touched the Aquiles heel of our HR IT. And, making the bridge with the topic being discussed earlier, in specific about the Recruitment and Selection Process, what I can tell is that many times we have to come up with work arounds to be able to work with the tools that we have currently available, and even in the description of the processes that I did at the time with my colleague in my department, when we were implementing the project, that is a perfect example of this problem: we had already started working on the process description, in a specific way, and then we were invited to a workshop about the ERP being implemented, and then we realized that the description that we have made was not sufficient to the new reality, i.e., the new reality demanded so many data that the simple and, in our opinion, functional approach, of our process description, would not be sufficient, so basically we had to start describing everything, considering not what we deemed correct or that made sense, but considering the information that this tool needed from us.

And, for me, the problem lies exactly here: when we are describing HR Processes, not based on that makes sense and is functional, but rather on that some technical application demands, which are its challenges and its needs.

And the recruitment and Selection process is, at this moment, even some time ago I was in a workshop with the HR Business Partners and one of them was saying, rightly so, that we, HR, cannot say to our internal clients which are recruiting, that we cannot do this recruitment in x time, because the application does not allow us to.

This was something that we lost a lot, this is why the satisfaction levels from the questionnaire that is done every two years regarding satisfaction with HR, have decreased.

And a lot due to this, because before we would have a reply flexibility that we do not have any more due to these HR IT tools, and here I include as well the usual question about our HR Master Data System and our Communication Data System, that we know that some situations happen where we have associates joining the company, getting hired and, It can be the case that due to some system error, they end up two weeks without being even able to use their computer. From one side, it is a big frustration, because I can imagine that must be horrible for someone to spend 8 hours during 2 weeks, every day, without anything to do, and from other side, it is something that …It is unthinkable that in a company with this size, shaping the future's technology, and our response is something like: an associate is unable to work because the hiring action was done with on a short notice and now it will take five days to the systems to communicate and then a ticket is necessary to do to the support teams and they are overwhelmed with work and without capacity, and worst case scenario, this person is two weeks being unable to work on the company, for me this is unthinkable in a company as big as ours, and it brings us to series of question, namely the technical complexity of the tools being used, and from other side the topic about capacity in the several teams, which is in its own a big problem on our organization, which is: the teams are lacking capacity to face all the work that they have, and from other side, we cannot say to our client that something is not possible to a limitation in the tool, when, in the past, we would use less sophisticated tools and we would have this flexibility, and here we should have, of course, a high level of standardization, globally, so that the information is comparable within the group, but we cannot loose flexibility and we cannot get used with the fact that the tool is complex and hard to change using a Change Request and change our processes to fit the tool . It shouldn't be like that. The tool is the one that should fit us, and not the other way around.

And this brings me to, as well, since we are taking about these topics, about the fact that the corporate departments doing or not doing what is needed to make the processes more agile, along with the tools, and I have a very concrete example: Our Leaving tool: we asked several times a solution to control several workflows necessary to assure whenever someone was leaving the company, because it was something that our Audit department was constantly

pointing out, the their reply was that they had something like that planned to be done on the next 2 to 3 years. Our reply was that, for us, it would be unthinkable to wait that much time, so we started to develop our own local solution, on which quite literally were 2 people developing the tool: my colleague on the IT part, and myself by specifying the requisites, so this is an example of how easy or not us to develop a tool is not always residing in technical, sometimes it is a matter of will and a matter to have the OK to go and implement, and we cannot wait two years for a central solution, so we ended up developing this local solution, against the central, they complain a lot that we did that, but we had to, because we cannot afford to wait around that much time.

And this is it, this is only showing what I was already saying, that is the fact that we cannot adapt out processes to the tools, the tools are the ones that have to adapt to us, regarding the Recruitment and Selection process, to go back to the question, at this point is very complex due to the questions regarding our HR Master Data System and our Communication Data System, the process of putting all this data in the Request Tool, in our ERP solution, because we have a process that should take 3 weeks, according to the process, when we know that many times we are not able to start the process 3 weeks in advance. And this is it.

Q: Work Practices?

Not answered.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

Not answered.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

A: Generally speaking, I think this is the right way to go, in a sense that the development processes become more homogeneous within the group, worldwide, and here I think that it also makes sense, but there are also some points to work on, and from the feedback that I got, it is not always clear to the managers what they are supposed to do, and even the document steps are complex, i.e., if we take on a practical example, the Performance Review process, which was done at the location, for example, here in my location, was an Excel file with a

number of questions, the manager would align the questions, the associate would write his comments and at the end, a grade was given. An evaluation.

Now, the process has changed, it is not as quantitative, it is more qualitative, but regarding the processes, there are much more steps. Meaning, there is the preparation, and after… I know about either 7 or 8 steps until the end, when the form goes from person to person, from manager to associate, to the HR Business Partner, to again, that I think that eventually, the manager loses control and loses the overview, maybe due to the fact as well that the notification system is not working correctly, they are not aware if they got a new form or not, they are not aware of the next steps that required to take place, so I think that in case of our Personnel Development Tool, I think that it was an improvement, now I think that it is a matter of maturation of the process, making small changes with the Change Requests that we are able to do and maybe to invest more in training both associates and managers, I think that people are still not aware, me as an associate included, I also am not fully aware of my role in each process. What do I need to do?. I think this is still not so clear. I because these are processes being done only once a year, people forget, therefore there has to be a way that people are reminded, but it should be simple. Nonetheless, I think it is going in a good way.

Q: Training Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Career Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Benefits?

Already mentioned.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

Already answered.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: The essential is... what I feel is that we attach too much our processes to the tools, while it should be the other way around, we should optimize our processes knowing that our tools will run on top of this processes, but ok, a lot of times this has to do with the kind of tool that is chosen, and this is always a decision being made at the central department, and maybe this is something to discuss with them, is that not always the best or better known providers for this IT Solutions are the ones providing applications that are easy to use or do adapt.

However, considering that the company is present in over 60 countries, and certainly has a lot of different realities in each one, it has to be agile in this way, maybe by searching new options.

7 – National HR Coordinator – Portugal (2)

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: Well I started last July so, over a month now.

Q: Functional area:

A: I am still discovering which position I am in. Why? Naturally, I was informed about this new project and which are the main areas of responsibility that my colleague has spoken before plus training topics and HR IT support as well, reporting wise. Therefore, right now I am trying to understand as much as possible about all of these processes, and in consequence, I cannot provide a great deal of detail. But, in a nutshell, these are the areas that I will lead in a near future.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: So…I will try to be succinct. I started my work as an Intern Lawyer, because I graduated in Law, I spent one season as intern lawyer but my main working area was Labor Law. It was then that I had my first contact with the areas of Management and HR Management, and these areas sparked some interest in me. After that, I started my career in Human Resources Management, first in Lisbon, then I moved to an international project that led me to three different countries, and after that I came back to Portugal, where I worked in Investment Banking, always in HR, and then on a IT Company, and finally I am here. So, it was a 10 year journey but, in a way, I feel that my last step, coming to this company, would not be possible without my previous experiences.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization? In this case, comment from your previous experiences.

A: Yes, on my international project, I was HR Responsible on a IT company, it was a company growing 100% per year, and within 7 years it reached 5000 associates, but due to this exponential growth, all of the area regarding processes, was totally… let's say, I wouldn't say overlooked but rather was put in second place. But it came a time when the organization felt the need to implement some tools targeted to control and organization.

With this, I mean that the company, when I moved with the ERP implementation, the implementation of the associate's portal, connected to this ERP, I was the Project lead together with the Chief Financial Officer, and, escalating to its smaller dimension, which is not comparable at all with our company, it was a quite complex project, but I could understand that it was totally aligned to what the company wanted**.**

Because the organization was not searching a complex tool, it wanted a simple tool, easy to use, with a simple interface and with very simple interaction, and that everybody would use it.

From here I can derive the strategic goal from the organization: to have an agile tool, that people would use, because, bottom line, the tool would allow a much better hour reporting, expenses, holidays, absences, reporting, etc., that basic set of information available to HR Management operations that would be them aligned with the financial department, controlling, billing, etc., so from the get go we had to have a very agile and easy tool, because we were trying to go from a scenario where pretty much nobody logged their hours, to a scenario where everybody had to log their hours.

Therefore, if the complexity was too high from the beginning, people would not want to log their hours, therefore I can even say that on an early stage, when the project was implemented, you would need to do 5 clicks to submit a Timesheet for the hole moth, because it was done on a weekly basis, so, with 5 clicks, you were able to submit this information.

One of the first changes done to this application was to change from 5 to 2 clicks. Because the feedback that we have received – and we are talking about an audience where 90% are IT

Consultants, were the first comment would be "If I had done it myself, I had done it better…" - and we decreased in such a way... Also, the reduction and simplicity of the approval process, but behind this I can derive the strategic alignment that existed with the organization, to have a simple tool, and here, even with one month already, I am having some trouble adapting to, and I can give my own example. I have a certain position in the organization, that is not a new position, and today I am still missing some roles, I do not know all the authorizations that I should have, I would say that 85% of them are still not assigned to me, and I am here since one month and a half already. We are taking about a slow month, with a lot of vacation time, but, worst case scenario, I could have 80% of my capacity limited due to one or more IT Tools. Which in way I understand, due to the complexity of this organization, not like my previous company, but I believe that an equilibrium should be reached – And we are not there yet.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization? In this case, comment from your previous experiences

A: Yes… comparing the first with the latter, I can see more and more the importance of information technologies being associated both with HR Management and the business needs themselves.

But I never, in any organization that I have worked in, went through so many struggles, in terms of HR IT, as I did here, because there was determinate tasks that would be required, and that would be done automatically, and for each hiring, it would be already done.

There wasn't this… and I have as well worked on an Italian multinational, but never in my career had I experienced that many complexity regarding HR IT. And a struggle that I am having as well is to understand that, at the end of the day, has the decision making power. Because, picture it, within any changes, that we deem as benefic to any kind of process, a change that can bring time saving, save money, etc. … with this high complexity of requesting for changes, waiting a lot of time for feedback, waiting a lot of time to perform tests, and then the cost is always very high, who is the person that could effectively check if, ok, this is useful to the organization or not, because we might be overlooking tools that can be really useful on simplifying a process, by the fact that they either have a prohibitive price, or that take so long to provide feedback to us that maybe at this point of time the organizational reality had already

changed, and the comparison that I make… and again, I consider always the dimension of the company, but on my last project, we would identify a need, we would contact the supplier, he would develop and would make a price suggestion, would put it in a test platform, we would validate and… we had development that in 3 weeks were in the portal available to everyone. And it went through the phases of validation, pricing, payment, testing... Etc. I understand that this company and structure are completely different, therefore, we cannot be 8 or 800, I think we should find a balance, because in the middle of this "battle", I think the words I heard the most up until this point were: "Change Request", "a lot of time" and "too expensive", and another thing that I am starting to understand is that, even though this is normal in every technical implementation project, is the need for improvement, now, maybe the organization is not interested in allowing a lot of these changes, maybe they intend to have a more compact product, equal for everybody, but this causes several issues locally, and they need to be aware of that. So, maybe the point about being too expensive and to take too many time can be related to the fact that a lot of different people is asking to the same team, or that from the central side they don't want to change something that was already implemented.

The strategic goal should be develop a completely homogenous platform, or on the other side, to develop a tool that is flexible enough to, within a general framework, to integrate several local realities?

I think that a shared focus. Because it is as well important to an organization that is scattered across all continents, to have information that is parameterized in such a way that its interpretation is as well easier and comparable. Because if we are comparing information from Europe and from Latin America, with completely different information, we would never be able to do a complete evaluation.

It has to exist some level of standardization, and that I can of course understand, completely, I would say that up to 85 to 90% should be standard, now it is needed to know that the local reality has some important and specific details, in the same way that each location has specific legal requirements, also it can have specific business needs, that are important to consider, so maybe this is the point that our company needs to feel necessity.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

[In regards to the new e-Recruting tool] From what I have understood, it is a simple process, it is a product that is being bought, not developed by the company, and is facing the current needs in recruiting, that are: simplicity, mobility, and contact with the candidates.

Therefore, making sure here that something happens, that is not happening often in big organizations, that is a permanent contact with the candidates, and often a bad image is created in the employment market because the company does not provide feedback, or when it is done, is done via an automatic e-mail, completely cold that prevents that the person sends in an application on a next phase.

My question, that I have not understood yet, but we are having a workshop happening in the meanwhile, the tool could be a good opportunity to simplify the onboarding process of an employee, because for example the basic information, being the name, the Tax number, etc., will be made available already in this new tool, so it wouldn't be necessary to ask again this information upon the hiring action, and this information to be maintained in IT systems again.

So, I am not sure if this is exist, I think this was not though about, but I think that this could be a way to avoid manual labor, because the associate is providing this information in the platform himself. It is, therefore, a way to start making the applications working together.

Even because there is here a point that I think is fundamental, that is: what is serving what? Because, ultimately, every products, every services, are created to meet a certain necessity, and the necessity cannot be created or demanded by the tool itself. Even this week I have

received an e-mail asking: "Do you want to be billionaire? Solve a problem of a billion people". Now, if we are causing problems to a billion people by implementing a tool, we will never be agile in our response, because the product / service cannot, or should not, define the rules.

Q: The new e-Recruiting Tool is a step towards this approach?

A: Yes, from what I could see. At least that is the goal, there is a strong focus on putting the candidate first, so from the get go there is present the User Experience, the simplicity, very present, and in the engagement itself. And it is exactly here that we should be focused, we cannot, it shouldn't happen, for example, that we create an excellent engagement on the recruiting process and then the candidate is hired and spend his two next weeks without working because the HR IT Tools do not allow him to. Therefore, this is a process that needs to be fluid, and therefore this is where we should work on.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

A: Here I cannot comment too much. I have seen the tool, I have read in part the processes themselves, but I cannot add much else, even comparing with other organizations where I was, because it was a more manual process, therefore we did not had such a tool focused especially in this processes.

Q: Training Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Career Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Benefits?

Already mentioned.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

Already answered.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: My opinion is going as well to the point that the tools should be the ones that are able to adapt to the processes. I think that a question is as well very important to answer, even though it seems to me that it would be very difficult: Who is the organization. Because we talk about meeting the needs of the organization, because this concept could be highly local. Here we think about our organization, in Germany about the German organization, and the same across 60/70 countries. So, necessities from which organization? It is a question a little bit hard to answer, hence my comment that we should have from 85% to 90% standardization. And this percentage has no study behind, this is only a feeling, but we should have some flexibility, in the same way that there is some flexibility to implement legal requirements, questions about local processes that are deemed as important.

Now, I think that the company has as well realized that there are too many cases where it has to be improved. However, due to the size of the company, the changes are very slow, and to change directions in a ship this size in the middle of the sea, it is needed to change now to be able to notice that it is actually changing its directions 2 years from now.

8 – Policy Maker for HR Process

Q: Number of years working for the company

A: 12 Years.

Q: Functional area:

A: Human Resources.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

A: Global policy and process expert for three associate development processes, which is the Performance Review, Career Development and Career Advancement.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: From my studies, I am a business lawyer, however I entered this company in parallel during my studies, and during those two years, among other things, I was responsible for an HR processes that was then called Executive Managerial Planning, in one of our business divisions. And, the process that I was responsible, during these two years, I then took over the ownership for the process and the tool, here in the headquarters, and that is basically how I started to become more involved into HR IT topics, because alongside with the process, I was also responsible for the tool we were developing then. And, since, then, I have been more or less involved in many of the HR IT topics, here at headquarters, which includes the Executive Managerial Planning, that is no longer available today, them on the whole area of staffing, I was responsible for the area of e-Recruiting system of the company, and then I eventually took over the responsibility of two elements in our Global System for Personal Development, namely on Associate Profile as the Operational Reporting, which then led me to the position I am in today, taking over the process responsibility for associate development processes, which are also part of the same tool.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: When I started in the company, we didn't has no global HR IT strategy, architecture or anything, we were developing tools that were very smart in excel, so we used Excel a lot, and the next step was that we started to develop tools in Java, using Oracle databases, that is basically what I did when I moved to headquarters. A process was done on a excel sheet was then transformed into a process done in a Java Tool. And, we had implemented this for a year and a half when the whole idea of concept of a whole HR IT global architecture came up. When we noticed that the tools that we currently have in HR area do not allow us to have a global analysis, or not to have a global standard, for HR Processes, and this was as well the beginning of HR Global. So, the initiative concerning HR IT and Personal Development Processes. And then, started out talking about an ERP system being used, because after excel and Java, an ERP was the way to go. So, we originally looked through solutions from our provider on our Associate Development Processes, and this quickly then turned into a cloud solution. This was a development that came up in the middle of the process, so, they switched from a on premise solution to a cloud solution, and that is where we are today, with the HR IT for the associate development processes. The provider of that cloud solution now is part of our current provider, so we have come back to them, but not your traditional system, but now cloud solution. We also moved from company developed tools, if you like, to on premise solutions to cloud solutions, and I think this company is following this cloud trend that we see on another companies, maybe not necessarily the size of the company, but they are shifting onto cloud solutions.

Q: Regarding this transformation, how much do you see this change as part of a HR Strategy? It is connected?

A: To be frank and honest, no. I think both topics, or let's say, the cloud solution that we were using, that was something offered to us that came up and we seized that opportunity. I do not

think that this is yet an integral part of HR IT Strategic approach, or architecture, which is also shown by the fact that there are no other systems that are cloud based, currently, or other systems that have influence on our Personal Development tool. Maybe this is just a simple case of me not knowing, but I have not heard about a strategy that says or gives me a picture on how the other HR IT tools either be converted to cloud solutions or they will be more smartly connected to that cloud solution. So I think that these are two separate topics and by coincidence they depend on each other.

But the overall development of HR IT related tools, do you think that follows any kind of HR Strategy?

Obviously, it has to follow some sort of strategy, because, otherwise… you know, generally, we are working on the topic of strategic relevance, and we are looking for solutions on this topics. I am not necessarily saying that the solutions that we then select, are the perfect solutions to reach our targets or follow the strategy, but most definitely we work on these topics because they have strategic relevance and we are looking for tools supporting that. And also, it has to do with the multitude of the different HR Processes that we have, which some of them are in one system, others are in different systems, so we still have a much diversified HR IT architecture, which then, from my personal point of view, shows that we do not have a cohesive HR IT Strategy.

Q: And do you see it walking into that direction?

A: Yes. It has to.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered previously.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered previously.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

A: A positive evolution. We came from a very decentralized recruiting process, where every location would basically do whatever they would like, with staffing positions, we have come to a situation where we have a more global approach, that was greatly beneficiated by a global solution that was offered, and we started with the OSP tool. And the OSP tool, a on premise solution, however, was a tool that was very customized to this company's demands, so it wasn't a standard solution and it was very high maintenance, and now we are in the process of offering a solution called Talent Hub, it has a premise that is candidate first, which I like very much, because focuses on the applicant journey, making it as easy and comfortable for the applicant for the candidate to apply, as opposed to making it as easy and comfortable as possible for the recruiter, to do their job. In that sense, this was a very good development and I am looking forward to see using Talent Hub eventually.

Q: Work Practices?

A: I think how people track their work packages is very individualized. I know a couple of tools that allow you to do that, there is OneNote, for example, Track & Release, or your good old Excel File or notebook for that matter. For me, personally, I like to work with a notebook, where I write things, so literally, a binder, a piece of paper, where I write my tasks. I do not like to use OneNote, don't like Track & Release much, however, I see the benefit of this kinds of tools, especially on virtual teams, or in teams that are staffed with team members that are not seeing each other personally on a regular basis, if you have a international team, or a team in other location. Then, I see the benefit.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

A: I have come to learn about approval processes in different areas, first of all in recruiting, so we have to have at the first place some kind of approval to even be able to staff to a position. And we always tried to have this approval processes within the tool itself, but we have failed.

Because it was simply not possible, you know, to come to an agreement to have a number of workflow processes that one could actually handle. I am saying, IT… probably, there are very good solution for approval processes out there, however we as a company, and with the matrix structures, the deferment locations, countries, divisions, product areas.. I think we make it difficult to ourselves to have a certain set of approval workflows or processes that everybody can agree on and since we have so many approval processes, so many workflows, it is difficult to standardize them and centralize them into one tool. I also know that there are approval processes when it comes to roles and applications and access rights, each system comes with a different set of roles and approval workflows, here this is an open topic where I think we definitely need to you know, restrict the number of workflow processes, or approval processes, to be able to use a tool that could actually support with that. Here, we definitely have an open point, on my perspective.

- Employees Performance Evaluation

I think we are still going through a learning curve here, we started out with the global processes, so when I joined, these processes where already described, however, the way they were conducted or implemented was very diversified, so it was very different in several countries, and we didn't have HR IT Tool, we were not able to control the process neither to analyze, yoy know, the process and the process results and so on. And then, HR Global was introduced, for the Development, and that now gives us the opportunity to have a global perspective on the development of our associates. With HR Global we have a tool, even though it is a standard application, it is still very company specific, which makes, we had a hardline standardization and globalization approach, we set standards that used to be applicable to all countries, no matter what, when it comes to the forms, the process, you know, how do you control, how do you report, how do you work with this processes, I now see that we are moving from.. This processes was really flexible, then with HR Global it became really structured and standardized, and now we are looking for solutions that are more flexible, that again take into consideration local or regional requirements. That are also taking into consideration different work methods. From a more traditional hierarchical organization, to project organizations, to agile organizations, which work completely differently, you know, to any number of additional organizational types and working styles, and now we are focusing on trying to provide a

solution that enables all of this different needs. So we came from early decentralized, to very centralized, and now we are moving towards a de-standardized. I believe here that the role of headquarters in the role of global coordinators is changing, they are no longer these persons that define what and how you have to do things, we are trying to move away from that kind of governance or controlling role, into a more consulting oriented role, we would like to offer solution, our consultation, being the process experts, we would like to offer platform solutions that can then be customized or configured to fit to whatever requirement that the location or working organization. So it is not anymore "One size fits all". We are moving away from that premise, more to, let's offer a minimum standard, and everybody can build upon that platform.

Q: Training Devolvement?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Career Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Benefits?

Not answered.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: Currently, it is complicating the processes. I sincerely hope that we are on the path to do that, but I am not entirely sure if this going to happen. That the stakeholders involved have the same opinion, and I am also not sure if the company being as big as it is, it will be able to come to a decision on that any time soon.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: I think it is important for HR IT to support the needs of requirement of the organizations, to act as a facilitator, as a support. Being able to use a tool that includes the requirements that we have for processes, at the one hand side. So they have to include the needs from our side. But I believe that, from a couple of years, we moved from the process says how the tool looks

like, to the tool says to us how the process needs to look like. And I think that neither of the two are the right approach. Because, I am convinced that HR IT solutions out there will have an impact on our process design, they shouldn't have such a huge influence, like they have today. HR IT solutions, today, are offering not so good outputs on our processes, they make it very difficult to have or document a conversation on a platform. It is just a huge effort on all involved people. To document something. And that is not right.

9 – Divisional HR IT Responsible

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: 4, 5 Years

At the beginning I started as a joint-venture, and now it is fully subsidiary.

Q: Functional area:

A: That is always HR IT of course, you know, I mean this strategic things which let's say… probably I can explain it better by saying where we are coming from. So, the joint venture, we have been very independent regarding which systems we are using, what level of integration we have, and so on, and that ok as long it was a joint venture, but at a point in time, when we became a 100% subsidiary, the role itself changed a lot. We are no longer, lets say, the master of the concept and strategic planning for this company, that was coming from headquarters in Stuttgart. And that is, let's say, where the role has changed, and in addition, we had a completely separate HR IT world at the joint venture, so anything that we have is anyway existing, of course, in our Group. So it was very clear from the beginning that we have to move or migrate our HR IT Landscape systems and everything to what exists in the whole Group. So that is, let's say, the history of the last 4, 5 years. We are now in the middle od this migration and we have 2, 5 years more to go.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

So, in HR IT, I am responsible very much for this 100 subsidiary, means making sure that the systems are up and running, and that therefore the processes in HR are in line, or let's say working fine for Managers and Associates. This is my "day-to-day" business". On the other hand, checking if the systems are compliant with legal requirements, worldwide, because this subsidiary has as well locations in 7 or 8 countries. And we are running payroll with that system, one system for 8 countries. So this the day to day business. And we have as well this big migration project, making sure that everything fits at the end of the day to one system. We have done a little bit in a way, but we have not finished yet. We have about 2,5 years, as

mentioned, until we have migrated everything. So Project Lead and Master of day to day business.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: Coming from a consulting company and then going in very much in the responsibility of running payroll and making sure payroll is fine, and all the subsequent activities you know, tax, social security, this kinds of things for Germany, Then, I was leading, setting up an HR Shared Services and leading that one and that is very much the path to HR IT. So it was always very much a mixture between HR and IT.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: That is, let's say, easy from an organizational point of view, I am already part of C/HMI, in Stuttgart, but still located in (Cidade??) so I have, let's say, my saying when we are planning the HR IT roadmap in this company worldwide. And setting the HR IT Roadmap every year. So everyone has its wish list, and then going into a discussion what will be let's say, on the agenda, and on the agenda, and by when this is happening.

And have you felt this "guiding light" coming from HR?

Not very much because, you know, because, if you are working so many years in HR IT departments, you know exactly what are the needs of HR is, and of course, general HR Strategic approach is not changing so quickly, but is definitely understood, due to demographic changes and things like that, no one from top management needs to explain what does it mean, for HR IT, that is assumed.. Let's say.. That you understand, and that you are talking two languages: a) that you understand HR languages and what the needs is for HR, locally, but also general worldwide, and that you are able to understand, speak and going into a deep discussion with IT colleagues, to make sure what the big general requirement is. And the general strategy is that this can be transformed into bits and bytes, let's say.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: What I see is that in general is understood is that the HR IT that we have set up 15/20 years ago, that is no longer acceptable to today needs, not just HR needs, I am talking about the costumers, and the hunt for talents has started a few years ago, and it is not acceptable anymore, for example, e-Recruiting, so, electronic way how to apply for a job, that was one step that has been set up on out old SAP systems and ways but that is not what the market and this current generation want to see. They want to have their Facebook or LinkedIn profile ans they want to apply with that profile, with two clicks, this is their expectation, so there is a completely or big move from HR is making sure that the processes are fine, to a much more customer-focused point of view. And, you know, say, let's say, old style HR systems, are not able to be changed quickly enough and that is why it was enabled the way to cloud solutions. So, SAP has bought Success Factors, just to make sure they are not disconnected from this new world, new way that costumers what to see HR systems, that they are not disconnected, that is my point of view. So this was only one example, e-Recruiting, but also other Talent Management solutions, and even Time Management, many companies are, of course, still struggling with Payroll, SAP has not really a good cloud solution for that, but it is of course a matter of time.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Previously answered.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: I think that was… this is not just HR, by the way, but it is clear that in HR this is much more requested than in the years before. From a software house as SAP, let's say, that is not the most clever or easiest way of programming solutions, or let's say from a technological point of view, but this is, yes, where the impact is very much coming from. And of course, we

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as HR are asking our associates, our customers, please do your self service activities, enter your leave request or whatever in a portal, because that is just an administrative piece of work, and we as HR need to focus on more strategic and business oriented support and so on, and the trend is to bring all of this into the Employee and Manager Self Services scenarios, I know that definitely not everyone and not every type of issue is ok with that, and only example, so, we see a concentration onto Shared Services, but this is let's say, no what the costumer always wants to see, especially when you are in very critical or sensitive data, where people do not want to send an e-mail to someone just explaining, a long e-mail explaining what is wrong in their payroll, they what to go with their pay slip to a person and ask him, hey, what is wrong, why do I have to pay this amount of taxes, or whatever, and where is my overtime payment and why is it not here and so on, so these are the things were we as an HR and from a Strategic RH approach, yes, we need to free HR to more strategic tasks, that is the way, implementing HR Shared Services Center and Employee Self Service scenarios, but this is not what the costumer, from my point of view, want to see, they still want to see a perfect support when they are in a real problem. And this is one element which is partly, let's say, overseen in all of this scenarios and strategic planning things, from my point of view.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

Already discussed earlier;

Q: Work Practices?

A: I see this is a must, I mean, the example of One Note, is very much doing commonly an accepted way to communicate and to use tools like Skype for Business, but as well WebEx and other tools to make sure that people can work synchronized, and have not to meet for each small things. Also, chat area on skype and things like that, that is state of the art and of course, people see it at the first time and say, we have not needed from 20 years, they probably don't see the benefit right from the beginning, but as quickly as soon as they are using it, they cannot imagine It otherwise, and doing it in the old style. It is very clear for me, if it has a benefit on

the day to day business, the tool is going to be too complicated, or not sufficient, the product will die that is clear for me.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

Here, HR IT role plays a big role of an enabler, and what we currently see is only a step in between. What I see, when we are talking about digitalization of HR, and supporting the business, we will come soon much more to a situation where we are using you know, this robots, that are havening a conversation and talking to you, on behalf of a real person. On the near future, what I see, it is very clear, what is technically possible, it will come, and that means if a manager has a talk, yearly review with his associate, and they are discussing If they are going to have a international assignment or something, then he, once the agreement is there, the agreement can come on a Sunday morning, then the manager should have a phone call to a machine and say: Mr. So and so has taking the package, please arrange the necessary processes. And in the back end, meetings are happening, organized, processes are deployed automatically, that is what I think were HR IT systems can really support the HR work, and the business itself. What we are seeing are just steps in between, and of course, the scenario that I described, with robots understanding and automating processes, is not probably the end, but we cannot imagine the technical possibilities from 20 or 30 years from now. I think we have a big space to grow in what concerns artificial intelligence and HR Processes automation, where we can really delight our customers with HR Processes and therefor supporting the business

Q: Training Devolvement?

No answer.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

No answer.

Q: Career Development?

No answer.

Q: Benefits?

No answer.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: Everything should be facilitated, and otherwise would not make sense or wouldn't be allowed, if you need a quick answer. That is very clear for me, what I think that currently we are not very good at, is that we are not well prepared for the, let's say, mid-term developments, that for example SAP's announcement that they want to have by the year 2025 everything in the cloud, if that comes true, we have now to start to think how can we bring our on premise solutions onto the cloud in 8 years' time. That is not that much time, for that big of a change.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: The importance will grow, that is very clear for me.

10 – Head of HR IT Support

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: From April last year. So almost 1, 5 years.

Q: Functional area:

A: HR IT. Something between IT and HR, it was always like this, so I was never directly in IT, but I was never directly in HR as well. So it is always the interfaces in between, if you see for example rollout projects, integration, PMI projects, so it was always me who walked in the middle, and still is like this.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

A: To be a kind of, let's say, translator, between the HR Strategy and the IT department, we need to translate the HR strategy into the HR IT systems.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: I was always responsible change projects, so whenever there was a change in the organization, I was the responsible project managers, in some organizational changes, integration changes, integrating IT, and that led to the point where I was leading change projects where I was changing work streams within HR and IT, but I also responsible for the legal topics, and for the purchasing topics, and so on, and then if you have a work stream just related to IT, we have to be more a IT person to really have a dialogue at the same level let's say, and then I was years ago really trying to understand the connection between the operational business purchasing, marketing, HR, to the IT, and I was into more to the IT, and that led me to the point where I would be kind of the interface between this two areas. So it was more that I, in a proactive manner, was decided to know this, there was nobody who had the knowledge, because that, you might know, if you are really in deep IT, you might be unable

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to see the operational business requirement and if you are really an operational person, it is not easy to understand the IT business in between. So being the interface, you don't have so many people who have both this insights, let's say.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

Answered in previous question

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: Yes, I think if I see just the last 15 of my working career with IT, and the last 6 working with HR IT, I would say that there were many changes, the reason is that HR was really more on a manual basis, focused on processes, and even then if the bigger company it comes to the point to automate let's say the processes, and to get more… There was always an IT in HR, for Payroll, but if you see the personal development processes, this was handled and even now is sometimes handled in excel or just writing some notes or something like this, and now, it became more famous to have in the fields of recruiting and personal development, to have more support from IT systems, and what you could see is that there is the one or the other company, who has started this years ago, they are now developing within the IT systems, and see that the original IT systems, how are they programmed and customized, are not really, at that time, not really related to the processes, to HR, so not really fitting, and now they are together developing how they could customize and program the new systems, and for those companies, who just started to use the IT, you could see that they are doing this work also together so, if you really ask me, in comparison, you see five or six years ago, it was more that the HR department chose the IT systems, and try to adopt the strategy to the IT Systems, and now I think there is more collaboration, together, that you really develop the system, HR and IT together, and this is the reason that we have this kind of interface department, HR IT, which you did not have before. Because if you see a comparison to six or ten years ago, you had IT and you had HR, you had nothing in between. And I think this is really a development, an evolution.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: Yes, what I see now is that we are on the first beginning of this century, that we are having the costumer more on focus, the costumer, the HR, but if you really see, how it is really happening within the companies, you see that there is a HR Strategy, which is coming, and thinking about how can HR Strategy be implemented, so this more or less, let's say, a top down topic. And, then, they are trying to analyze how the current IT Systems and maybe new IT Systems, can really support the HR Strategy, so for the really enlargement of the current IT system, I think they are, the enlargement and also for the implementation of new systems, they are really having the costumer more on focus. The question is that if the IT systems are really able to have the costumer on focus, the current ones. If you see, for the new integrations, of the new IT which are integrated, they are really trying to adopt the focus on the customer needs, if you see the new recruitment tool, for example, this is the pitch perfect example and I think for this they are trying to have the costumer on focus, but if you see the old systems, the old HR IT systems, you see the, let's say, the systems which are on cloud applications, for the persona development you see that they are not really the costumer or they didn't had the costumer on focus when they developed it, and now as they are using UX in projects, they are trying to adapt to the customer needs, but I see that the IT Systems are limited, to a certain point, and due to the fast and flexible growing of the needs of the outside, I think the current systems are not really made for this flexibility, but for the new systems, I think yes, that is really having the customer on focus.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

A: Already discussed.

Q: Work Practices?

A: I see that this is happening in this departments that are really related to IT. For example, if you see the HR IT, for example, in this case the people are having, let's say, some self-motivation to work with IT Tools, supporting the daily business. Also, like Super OPL, for example. So they are really aware that there is something like this existing, and due to that, they are using it. They are kind of, let's say, "Techies". They really like to work with IT. I think for the other departments, if you really compare it to HR for example, the first step is that it is really existing something like this, and them the second thing is, they are not quite sure if they would really use it, they are maybe not this kind of technical driven people. So, just giving you an example, sometimes the HR is struggling to use the current HR IT Systems, and if you have then another IT System to use, and to understand, I think they won't use it. Often, the reason is that it is that the IT Tools are not having this "keep it simple, short and stupid" approach, i.e., KISSS – it is like an iPhone, being used by 2 year olds. This systems are sometimes too complicated, and also the supporting tools sometimes. So you have to have, first of all, kind of IT knowledge, to use them, or let's say really an interest on them, you have the motivation to use it, or the situation to use it. What I think as well, if you think as well in the supporting tools, as I said, for those who really like to work with them and know that they are existing, they would use it, and I think it is good, they will help, but for those who are not really not that into IT, I think for them is like, they won't use it, and the reason it that they are also overloading with other IT topics, that they are not dealing that they could not deal with it , because we are going really fast, into the direction that we each process is supported by some kind of IT, so if they have the availability, they would use it.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

A: For the centralization, having the IT system, or the HR IT systems, and processes, in place, it is helping, for the decentralization, I also think this is helping. Even if you have really HR Processes supported by IT systems, then you have a kind of let's say a common understanding how processes are working, because you don't have any extra regulations or something, or extra processes going on. That means, for each and every process that you have, giving the example of recruiting tool, and this is within the systems, so it is super clear how the process is running from A to B. So if you have a different mindset and you don't have not the

possibility to do it otherwise. Really focused on centralization, so the HR Processes within one central, I think therefore it is supporting, but also thinking about de-centralization, so if you think on a department, you have each hub, let's say, then also makes sense have the same understanding on the processes, to have a comparison to the other ones. So, both are being supported.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

Already discussed.

Q: Training Development?

Already discussed.

Q: Career Development?

Already discussed.

Q: Benefits?

A: To be honest, yes and no. I tell you why. The reason is, and that is what we are discovering currently, and also in the past, for example, with HR Global and ASR, is that it comes to the point that the managers are not talking anymore with the associates. And I think this is a risk that we are facing, if we have all processes in IT systems, and it is no longer to really talk to the associate. And communication, needs to be always to be a personal topic. If you really talk with the associate, tell him how the development and performance is and so on. And this is what we are centrally discovering is that there are so many managers who just use the tool but don't talk anymore with the associates, for example for the GPD, for the ASR, for the CAD, not talking anymore, just doing this in the IT System. So, therefore, I would say that this is not good. It is supporting on making the processes leaner and more transparent. So we need to work on each and every process and see which process step is necessary, being transparent, for that IT is super good.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: I think better.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: I think it is a growing role. Yes, I think that is a growing role and, the IT Role it is really HR IT Role, the strategy how you really define, this is the complete strategy, even the strategy of the hole company, I think IT is affecting this strategy now, and in the future more. You can also see this, seeing the current strategies and how they are going to be developed, there is always IT leading the discussion, so, this is changing a lot, yes.

1 – Local HR Director – Lisbon (Portugal)

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: 22 anos

Q: Functional area:

A: Eu sou responsável de RH da empresa em Lisboa, trabalho na empresa há 22 anos, não comecei logo na área de RH, comecei na área de Vendas, de apoio às vendas, apoio interno, e entretanto fiz o curso e comecei na área de RH há 12 anos. Como técnica de RH, e neste momento sou responsável. Em termos funcionais, como eu digo, sou responsável por todos os colaboradores aqui em Lisboa, neste momento nós somos 220. Temos 3 entidades legais da empresa aqui em Lisboa, uma delas é a que faz parte deste Serviço de RH que temos cá, desde 2015. E relativamente há minha responsabilidade, aqui é essa. Neste momento também o desafio que nós temos resulta da nova estrutura da área de RH a nível mundial da empresa, exatamente com novas ferramentas informáticas que dão suporte a todos os processos, e que o objetivo central é ter a informação centralizada, a nível mundial, no que diz respeito à gestão e informação dos colaboradores, etc., e também no que diz respeito às ferramentas de desenvolvimento. Como formação, avaliações de desempenho, avaliação do potencial dos colaboradores, a ideia é esta informação estar toda disponível para ser consultada em toda a organização a nível mundial, ou pelo menos nos países que já têm neste momento estas ferramentas e disponibilizado essencialmente para os *managers*. Para eles próprios terem informação acerca dos seus colaboradores, informação *online* e que é geral para todos os colaboradores.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: Os conceitos estratégicos do HR são neste momento, definidos pela casa-mãe, no geral, em termos das ferramentas que nos disponibilizam, em cada localização, para que nós possamos usar e trabalhar da melhor forma a informação. O que temos que fazer localmente é com essas ferramentas, disponibilizadas centralmente, utilizá-las da melhor forma, junto dos *managers* de cada uma das localizações e de acordo com os objetivos do negócio que nós temos. Ou seja, neste momento o papel do HR a nível local é muito de consultoria, de parceria com cada uma das chefias e com os objetivos que se pretendem para cada um dos negócios, tentar ter os melhores colaboradores, com as melhores competências, e os mais motivados, para que o negócio corra bem, e para isso exatamente estas novas ferramentas de RH são essenciais para gerir toda esta informação.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: Neste momento, começamos em Portugal há dois anos, em 2015, com a implementação destas novas ferramentas. Eu não queria dizer que passado 2 anos ainda estamos na fase de implementação, já passámos, acho que agora estamos na fase de conhecer melhor as ferramentas (quando digo nós, refiro-me aos RH e aos managers), porque de facto em termos de disponibilização da informação, é muito mais fácil. Por exemplo, estamos a fazer a avaliação de um colaborador este ano, mas temos disponível no sistema de igual forma e para todos os colaboradores, e para todas as chefias, neste caso a informação reporta apenas a 2015, foi quando começamos o projeto, mas imagine, daqui a 5, 10 anos, vamos ter todo o historial do colaborador disponível informaticamente, e antes a ideia que eu tinha como RH é que esta informação estava um pouco dispersa.

Chegamos a fazer em papel, depois tínhamos algumas ferramentas já *online* que também funcionavam bem mas não eram transversais a todas as localizações da empresa, por exemplo, em Portugal. Imagine, por exemplo, um colaborador, que tivesse na nossa fábrica no Norte, e fosse trabalhar por exemplo no Norte ou Lisboa, nós precisávamos de pedir os dados do colaborador às localizações, e neste momento já não. E por exemplo, é bom também em termos de formação profissional, uma das coisas que a empresa está a apostar também é na transversalidade da função a nível mundial. Por exemplo, um Técnico de RH, deve ter as mesmas competências quer esteja em Portugal, Alemanha ou na China. E isso também é bom. Torna as coisas mais claras e mais transparentes. Portanto acho que estas ferramentas, quando tiverem a rolar e funcionar bem, porque acho que algumas das ferramentas, por exemplo ferramentas de análises salariais que ainda estão a ser implementadas, e portanto essas ainda não estão estabilizadas, mas eu estou em querer que quando tudo estiver a funcionar bem que será bom, porque a informação estará disponível.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Regarding the actual HR Processes that integrated HR IT solutions, how would you classify their "change"? Either directly connected as someone involved or just as a day-to-day user?

A: Sim, sem dúvida considero que é uma mudança positiva. Agora, eu acho que a maior dificuldade, que eu vejo, é os responsáveis de cada área, as diferentes chefias, umas mais que outras, olharem para esta nova estratégia dos RH como algo que também é bom para eles, porque, por exemplo, com estas ferramentas de RH… por exemplo, a avaliação de desempenho, é feita uma vez por ano, na prática as chefias acederam a esta ferramenta até agora, duas vezes, em 2015 e 2016, e portanto acho que temos, todos nós, de criar o hábito de usar mais estas ferramentas, para elas se tornarem mais fáceis, mais *user friendly*, e por outro lado para que eles vejam que estas ferramentas podem realmente ter importância e podem ser usadas a favor das equipas porque a informação está disponível e a empresa investiu imenso nas ferramentas

Q: This topic takes us to another one, which is the step that is lacking to achieve this full integration

A: Aqui a questão acho que tem mais a ver com: antes da implementação deste projeto em 2015, nós nos RH, fazíamos tudo para os *managers* e equipas de negócio que temos na localização. Neste momento, com este novo projeto, nós pedimos a que os *managers* sejam também nossos parceiros, e antes eles tinham um papel mais passivo, e agora, porque a informação está disponível, o que pedimos é que tenha, um papel mais ativo, porque de facto, esse potencial numa gestão de negócio, a própria gestão dos Recursos Humanos. E é esse *mindcset* que é o papel dos RH que devemos passar para os *managers*, porque anteriormente eles deixavam muito a GRH nos RH, e agora não, não necessariamente só de há dois anos atrás, nós temos vindo a tentar mudar na gestão de equipas esse *mindset*, mas com estas novas ferramentas, com estas novas ferramentas disponíveis, eles podem ter um papel muito mais ativo e portanto olharem para estas ferramentas como uma mais-valia.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

Already mentioned;

Q: Work Practices (e.g. flexible work practices)?

A: Completamente diferente. Não só em HR, no geral, na organização, e acho que isso acontece na maior parte das empresas que estão atualmente no mercado, cada vez mais, o dia-a-dia de trabalho no escritório passa por estas ferramentas informáticas, como o Skype, o One Note e tudo mais. E portanto isso também é uma exigência complementar para todos os colaboradores no geral. Todos nós temos que nos adaptar a essas novas ferramentas, que no geral, no nosso dia-a-dia, não só a nível de trabalho em particular, mas acontece. Portanto, o que acho que às vezes acontece, e na empresa, o que acho é que não se dá, há muito esta coisa agora de… imagine, o One Note, que é uma ferramenta ótima. É passada a informação, explica-se qual é o conceito por trás, as mais-valias dessa nova ferramenta, e depois a formação

está no *link,* que nós vamos a uma formação digital, fazemos a formação, e acho que falta aqui um bocado, porque nem todas as pessoas têm a mesma curiosidade, nem a curva de aprendizagem é igual para todos. E eu acho que nestas novas ferramentas, que são essenciais, com que nos convivemos diariamente, faltava um bocado isso, e puxando a questão dos RH, faltava um pouco mais de formação e acompanhamento, de sessões abertas, para dúvidas, que em algumas áreas estão planeadas, mas ainda não aconteceram.

Em resumo, estas ferramentas são muito boas, umas mais que outras, não tenho dúvidas, mas a informação tem que ser vendida muito bem para que os utilizadores acreditem nelas. E isto também é valido para as ferramentas de RH. Se não vendermos bem estas ferramentas aos nossos clientes internos, eles nunca vão dar valor a elas. Portanto, temos que vender bem, e para isso dar algum apoio.

Efetivamente, há toda essa dimensão do *engagement*, da utilização.

Só assim é que as coisas funcionam. E a a mesma coisa para o HR IT. Se todos nós não acreditarmos, cada um nos nossos papéis, nós nos RH, os *managers* na sua área de responsabilidade, os próprios colaboradores… e isso aconteceu, foi a maior dificuldade, em 2015, quando implementarmos as novas ferramentas de Time Management, o ESS/MSS, que houve muita dificuldade em os colaboradores… para já há sempre a questão da resistência da mudança, mas de facto não foi muito fácil vender as novas ferramentas aos colaboradores. E pronto, as pessoas têm que acreditar.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

A: Eu os melhores colaboradores e os mais competentes. A gestão do dia-a-dia, na minha opinião, tem que ser feita entre a chefia e os colaboradores, não tenho duvidas, devemos dar muito apoio de consultoria na acho que esta forma de GRH mais próxima entra a chefia e os colaboradores para mim, é o ideal. Como RH, o que temos que fazer é garantir que temos área de RH, se houver alguma questão legal, apoiar o desenvolvimento daquilo que for necessário, decido juntamente com as chefias, para os colaboradores, e estas plataformas servem exatamente esse propósito, portanto acho que é uma mais-valia, não tenho dúvidas

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

Pois, eu acho que, é assim eu acho que tem que haver sempre aquela parte, e é o que nos pedem cada vez mais nos RH, de consultoria junto com as chefias, e com os próprios colaboradores também. O colaborador também pode querer ter a iniciativa de se querer desenvolver numa determinada área, etc. Não é necessariamente algo que tenha que partir da chefia, pode partir do colaborador. Portanto, essa parte de consultoria, continua a haver, e é importante o nosso papel junto das equipas. O que as ferramentas trazem é uma forma de disponibilizar a informação de uma forma mais *standard* e mais transparente para todos os intervenientes, quer para o colaborador, quer para a chefia, quer para os RH, a informação está lá e pode ser consultada por qualquer um de nós, portanto há mais transparência também nos processos. É preciso que os utilizadores, a todos os níveis, passem a utilizá-la mais. Porque é uma pena de facto, o que se investe nestas ferramentas, é uma pena não ser utilizada a informação por falta de conhecimento. Por isso é que estava a dizer que é importante vender bem estas ferramentas a todos os utilizadores para que as pessoas acreditem e ganhem o hábito e tenham o interesse de ir lá consultar o sistema de gestão do desempenho, por exemplo. Ver a minha última avaliação de desempenho, que cursos já fiz, que cursos tenho planeados para fazer.

Q: Training Devolvement?

Already discussed.

Q: Career Development?

Already discussed.

Q: Benefits;

A: Pode ser uma mais-valia, mas tem que haver sempre uma comunicação entre a chefia e os RH. Porque os RH têm o *overview* da organização e isso é essencial manter. Porque cada grupo de trabalho, cada equipa, conhece bem a equipa, mas nós, nos RH, temos uma visão holística de toda a empresa, dos objetivos de uma área ou outra, e muitas vezes, ou por vezes, pode-se cruzar… o desenvolvimento de um colaborador não tem…o desenvolvimento muitas vezes acontece entre áreas de trabalho. Portanto eu acho que qualquer decisão que tenha a ver com RH., os colaboradores têm que passar sempre pelos RH, nem que seja em termos de

conhecimento, era o que estava a dizer, em termos de autonomia de decisão, os *manager*s já estão muito, têm muita autonomia, e nós nos RH não questionamos de alguma forma uma decisão que é tomada, porque normalmente tem a ver com o negócio, e eles são os mais conhecedores do negócio, agora tem que ser partilhado pelos RH, por motivos de, por exemplo, equidade interna, e isso nós é que temos enquanto visão da organização. Um aumento salarial, por exemplo, tem que ser sempre validado pelos RH, como é óbvio, porque nós é que temos a indicação do budget, que estrutura é que temos na organização, os níveis salariais, esse tipo de informação tenho a certeza que tem que passar sempre pelos RH. Por tanto a questão do *payroll*, se houver melhoria nas ferramentas informáticas, na eficácia do *payroll,* tudo bem, mas em termos de informação tem que passar sempre pelos RH. Não pode deixar de ser.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

A: A facilitar, não tenho dúvidas nenhumas.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: Para mim, todos os temas de informação têm que funcionar sempre como base de trabalho para uma tomada de decisão. Aqui, os RH têm então que estar sempre presentes, estamos a falar de pessoas, de relações pessoais, e portanto o que vejo, a mais-valia destas novas ferramentas é dar suporte a nível de decisão, de gestão, mas depois a avaliação concreta, no terreno, tem que ter sempre este caráter pessoal e relacional, porque estamos a falar de pessoas e motivações. Portanto, acho muito bem que desenvolvam estas ferramentas, são essenciais para a gestão, para tomada de decisão, para avaliar dados, mas a decisão tem que ser tomada com base nas pessoas, e isso é muito importante, e por vezes o que noto é que quando se implementam estes sistemas informáticos, estamos muito focados nessas ferramentas e esquecemos um bocado esta parte relacional dos colaboradores, e isso não pode acontecer. É preciso arranjar aqui um equilíbrio.

6 – National HR Coordinator – Portugal (1)

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: 3, 5 anos.

Q: Functional area:

A: A minha área está descrita como técnicas de RH para projetos e processos.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

Neste momento são a gestão e operacionalização dos processos de expatriação, ou destacamentos internacionais, a gestão dos processos de RH, ou seja, a coordenação e melhoria contínua desses processos juntamente com os HR Locais os Serviços de RH, a área de *Personnel Marketing*, portanto, tudo o que está relacionado com o *employer branding* da empresa, e também suporte em algumas das ferramentas de HR IT, mais locais, e suporte noutro tipo de ferramentas, mais ao nível de *change request.*

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: Eu comecei aqui como estagiária, e na altura entrei para dar suporte no projeto de restruturação dos RH, que foi um projeto de envergadura muito grande na empresa a nível mundial e também em Portugal, e foi nessa altura que comecei a ter mais contacto com a parte do HR IT, porque durante esse projeto eu fiquei responsável pela especificação de requisitos da ferramenta de pedidos, que é uma ferramenta que hoje em dia usamos para fazer *tickets*, ou seja, fazer a comunicação entre os departamentos locais de RH e os serviços que fazem o processamento de dados, e portanto diria que esse foi o meu primeiro grande passo e o que me levou, ou o que mais proporcionou que o meu percurso profissional enveredasse por este caminho. Terminado esse projeto, e finalizado na minha parte o sistema de pedidos., foquei-me mais na descrição e otimização dos processos de RH, isto porque como a forma de comunicação entre todas as áreas de RH, aliás, criaram-se novas estruturas nos RH que até aí não existiam, os Serviços, e criou-se também uma nova forma de comunicação entre os

departamentos locais e esses mesmos serviços, e portanto tudo isso originou uma grande mudança e otimização nos processos de RH, e portanto foi nessa parte que depois me foquei, na prática trabalhando no HR Country, e passámos uma grande parte do nosso tempo focadas na descrição e otimização dos processos, que ainda hoje são usados e cujos *process folders* são a base da forma de trabalho entre os HR locais e os Serviços de RH, e depois daí naturalmente fui evoluindo naturalmente para outras áreas do HRC, que não são só os processos, como são a expatriação e o *personnel marketing*.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization?

A: Neste momento, eu sinto que não está completamente alinhada, pelo facto de eu ter passado algumas das minhas responsabilidades na área de HR IT durante o projeto, que depois foram indo para outros colegas da organização. Ou seja, neste caso por exemplo a responsabilidade pelo sistema passou para os colegas no Serviço no Norte, as responsabilidades mesmo por exemplo a minha participação no ESS / MSS também não foi como responsável, apenas um papel de suporte, e o mesmo no ERP global e no ERP local, a única área que a responsabilidade se mantém no HR Country para já, é o Controlo de Despedimentos, sendo que também está partilhada com colegas no Serviço. E portanto, nesse sentido, não sei se a minha função não é, ou pelo menos a parte primordial da minha função não está ligada com o HR IT. Mas sim com os outros tópicos.

Q: Do you think that both should be aligned?

A: Sim, acho que sim, isto porquê? Porque passando a responsabilidade das ferramentas para os serviços, inevitavelmente os Serviços vão-se focar muito nos aspetos técnicos, e acho que o HRC consegue ter uma visão mais abrangente, por um lado, da parte técnica, que os serviços necessitam, mas também por outro lado, da parte mais estratégica e funcionalidade que os HR Locais têm que ter, e o que sinto neste momento é que os HR Business Partners queixam-se muito e têm bastantes problemas com a complexidade das ferramentas IT, e que muitas vezes a resposta que têm é que tem que ser assim, porque tecnicamente é impossível, ou tecnicamente demora muito tempo, ou custa muito dinheiro fazer de forma diferente, portanto, essa responsabilidade estando do lado do Serviço, o Serviço vai sempre puxar para essa parte mais

técnica e se calhar perder um bocadinho o foco que é as ferramentas HR IT devem existir para nos facilitar a vida e não para nos complicar o processo. E acho que no HR Country conseguimos ter a visão dos dois lados, o que é que tecnicamente podem ser feitos, e o que funcionalmente também devemos garantir.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization?

A: Sim, olha, por um lado, há ferramentas que eu acho que eram mesmo essências e inevitável ter, e eu tinha o exemplo mais próximo, aqui no Norte, quando eu entrei, ainda se fazia processamento salarial praticamente manual, era mesmo um processo medonho, e portanto nesse sentido eu acho que tinha toda a lógica dar o próximo passo e avançar para um sistema como o HR Core, ou semelhante ao HR Core. Mas já aí temos uma grande problemática: que é facto de o nosso *provider* ser indiscutivelmente uma ferramenta muito boa, e muito robusta, mas que também é muito pesada e pouco ágil e flexível. E nós estamos a falar de uma realidade, onde temos dentro do mesmo país, contratos coletivos de trabalho diferentes, regras diferentes de processamento, e nem sempre é fácil de adaptar dento desse sistema. Ou seja, por um lado eu acho que caminhámos no sentido certo, ao tentar, não diria automatizar, mas utilizar ferramentas mais avançadas, mas por outro lado ainda estamos naquela fase acho que muito inicial, de adaptação e melhoria continua, porque ainda há muitos erros de processamento e coisas que para alterar um parâmetro ou rúbrica acabas por estragar outras, e portanto acho que mesmo em termos de ERP, que é o essencial para nós, acho que ainda não estamos totalmente estáveis, mas na minha perspetiva era um ponto essencial. Em relação às outras ferramentas, por exemplo em relação ao ESS / MSS, acho que faz todo o sentido caminhar nessa direção, ou seja, de o próprio colaborador conseguir visualizar os seus tempos, picagens, ausências, etc., e de as chefias também terem acesso para verificarem a situação das suas equipas, mas, à semelhança do ERP para *payroll*, acho que ainda há muito a correr no ESS, especialmente na visualização das chefias, há uma série de relatórios que não estão a funcionar corretamente, e também muitas vezes a resposta que temos é: "Ok, fazemos o *Change Request* para esses relatórios, mas demora muito tempo a ser analisado e criado", depois demora muito tempo a ser testado também, depois ao fazer uma alteração acaba por se mexer em outra coisa e tem que se testar as duas, ou seja, também há muito a melhorar. Mas acho que nesses dois

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aspetos a empresa está a seguir no caminho certo. O que na minha ideia não faz muito sentido e acho que é algo que daqui a alguns anos vamos olhar para trás e perceber, na minha perspetiva, que foi um erro, que é o Sistema de Pedidos, ou pelo menos da atual forma que os processos estão desenhados com o Sistema de Pedidos. Isto porquê? Porque temos um serviço em Lisboa, ou no Norte, que está a receber indicações de HR Business Partners nas localizações, e que precisa de receber todos os detalhes administrativos, todos os detalhes, exaustivamente, para conseguir mantê-los em sistema, e na logica que nos foi vendida na altura do projeto, era libertar os HR Business Partners do trabalho administrativo, que na altura era feito na localização, para que eles se pudessem focar mais na parte estratégica da sua função, ou seja, dar aconselhamento às chefias, prever mudanças a nível estrutural e de negócio e preparar os seus departamentos para isso, dar todo o suporte no recrutamento e seleção, no desenvolvimento de colaboradores, etc. O que está a acontecer é que, acho que se descurou um ponto que era o essencial: na versão anterior, nós tínhamos as figuras das assistentes, entre aspas, na própria localização, e eram pessoas com muitos anos de casa, muita experiência, e que sabiam exatamente para cada processo, que tipo de dados é que tinham que manter no sistema, portanto HR Business Partner, vou dar um exemplo concreto, numa admissão, o Business Partner não tinha que dizer à assistente aqui nesta localização no Norte, qual é que é a repartição CNP/CPP, qual é a categoria profissional, qual o código específico para o Relatório Único, ele só tinha que dizer: "Olha, vai entrar o Sr. Manuel, no dia x, e vai para a função de Hardware Developer I, no ENG, e depois as assistentes tinham todo um *know how* por trás para saber que para aquela função corresponde uma categoria profissional x, que exige esta e aquela informação. E pronto, com a criação dos Serviços, acho que se descurou um pouco esta questão do *know how* local, ou seja, criaram-se dois novos serviços, com pessoas completamente novas na organização, muitas delas com muito pouca experiência de trabalho, nós sabemos que o recrutamento foi quase todo de pessoas quase recém-licenciadas, e que portanto essas pessoas não iam conseguir manter no sistema estes dados a não ser que estes dados lhes fossem dados a 100%, através do tal ticket, pelos HR Business Partners. Ou seja, na prática, o que está a acontecer, é que o HR Business Partner, ou a assistente, na localização, tem que inserir os dados todos ou se não são 100%, são 90 e muitos, para uma admissão, transferência, saída, etc., o HR Business Partner ou a assistente é que tem que dar esses dados todos, tem que os inserir todos, para depois o Serviço receber e passa-los todos para o ERP de

payroll. Ou seja, na prática, se formos a analisar, é quase aqui uma duplicação de trabalho que é desnecessária, pelo menos no caso de Portugal. Acredito que o Serviço para outros países se calhar tenha outras vantagens que para nós não tem, e portanto nesse sentido para mim o Sistema de Pedidos devia ter sido pensado de forma diferente, e até já há um projeto a nível central que vai mais ou menos nessa direção, ou seja, tentar estandardizar alguns campos no Sistema de Pedidos que ao serem preenchidos pelo Business Partner podem ser automaticamente transportados para o ERP, sem terem que ser validados ou copiados pelo Serviço, portanto já se está a perceber que alguns campos em que não há vantagem nenhuma em ter duas pessoas a transcrever o mesmo dado, mas que para mim também não resolve o problema, que continua a ser que o HR Business Partner, de raiz, ou a assistente, na localização, é que tem que dar esses dados todos, quando se calhar a lógica otimizada da coisa, seria, como já está a acontecer mais na Alemanha e nos Estados Unidos, que é o próprio serviço tomar parte de alguns processos, por exemplo, a expatriação, as admissões nos EUA também são assim, que é no sentido de o HR Business Partner indicar que o processo se inicia e se processa de determinada forma, e o próprio serviço contacta o colaborador ou a chefia, para recolher dados, e colocar no sistema. Isso para mim faria mais sentido. E nesse caso, o Sistema de Pedidos seria apenas uma forma de comunicação mais simples a dizer, olha, a pessoa com o nº de pessoal x, vai ter esta ação no dia y. E com base nesta informação, o serviço colecionar todos estes dados com a chefia, colaborador… todas as partes envolvidas, basicamente, e manter no ERP. Mas isso iria também implicar dar muito mais autonomia e muito mais responsabilidade às funções que estão atualmente no Serviço. Ou seja, basicamente, era fazer uma cópia da situação antiga, onde no próprio HR Local tinhas uma equipa, que era a equipa de dados, digamos assim, e era essa própria equipa que recolhia os dados que precisava, para manter no sistema local, portanto a ideia era a mesma, ou seja, o HR Business Partner só dizia que quer fazer uma Entrada, Saída ou Transferência, da pessoa x na data y, e o Serviço ir recolher junto das partes envolvidas toda a informação necessária.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

A: Acho que tocaste no calcanhar de Aquiles do HR IT. E fazendo a ponte com o assunto anterior em discussão, e pegando especificamente no processo de Recrutamento e Seleção, o que eu noto é que muitas vezes nós temos que desenvolver "artimanhas" ou *work-arrounds*, para conseguir trabalhar com as ferramentas que temos atualmente, e mesmo na descrição dos processos, que na altura fiz com a Joana Lino, quando estávamos a implementar o projeto, aí acho que já mostra o principal problema: Eu e a Joana já tínhamos começado a desenhar os processos de uma forma, ate que houve uma altura que nos convidaram a participar num *workshop* do ERP, e foi aí que se fez luz na nossa cabeça e percebemos que a forma como estávamos a descrever os processos não era suficiente para a nova realidade, ou seja, a nova realidade exigia tantos dados que a forma simples e, achávamos nós, funcional, como nós estávamos a descrever os processos, não ia ser suficiente, portanto basicamente tivemos que começar a descrever tudo, não à luz do que nós achávamos que fazia sentido, mas à luz do que alguma ferramenta precisava que nós lhe dessemos. E para mim o problema está exatamente aí, quando nós estamos a descrever processos de RH, não com base no que faz sentido e no que é funcional, mas com base no que alguma aplicação técnica, quais são as dificuldades de alguma aplicação técnica, e o que é que ela necessita. E o processo de Recrutamento e Seleção é neste momento, ainda há pouco tempo tivemos um *workshop* com os HR Business Partners, e a Ana Correia dizia, e bem, que nós, RH, não podemos dizer aos nossos clientes internos, que são os departamentos internos que estão a recrutar, que não podemos fazer o recrutamento em x tempo, porque a aplicação não deixa. E isto foi algo que se perdeu muito, e também foi por isso que os níveis de satisfação do inquérito que é feito bi-anualmente sobre a satisfação com os RH, baixaram. E muito em parte por isto, porque antigamente tínhamos uma flexibilidade de resposta, que agora não temos por causa dessas ferramentas HR IT, e aqui eu incluo aquela questão também já recorrente do sistema de dados mestre e do sistema de dados de comunicação, e que nós sabemos que muitas vezes temos colaboradores que chegam, são admitidos, e ficam duas semanas se acesso sequer ao computador. Por um lado, é dinheiro

desperdiçado, porque estamos a pagar a esta pessoa, por outro lado é a frustração muito grande, porque imagino que deva ser horrível passar 8h durante duas semanas, todos os dias, sem nada para fazer, e por outro lado, é algo que é impensável numa empresa desta dimensão, que se diz a empresa que está a moldar a tecnologia do futuro, e termos uma resposta do género: a pessoa não tem acessos porque a admissão foi feita assim um bocado em cima da hora e portanto agora demora 5 dias a haver comunicação entre os sistemas e depois tem que ser feitos tickets para as equipas de suporte, e essas equipas está cheio de trabalho e não tem capacidade suficiente, e no limite a pessoa fica duas semanas sem trabalhar na empresa. Isto para mim é impensável numa empresa da dimensão da empresa e leva-nos a uma série de questões, nomeadamente a complexidade técnica das ferramentas, por outro lado a questão das capacidades das equipas, que também é um problema muito grande na nossa empresa, que é: as equipas não têm capacidade para responder a todo o trabalho que recebem, e por outro lado a questão de não podermos dizer ao nosso cliente interno que algo não é possível porque existe alguma limitação na ferramenta, quando no passado, eram ferramentas mais arcaicas, nós tínhamos essa flexibilidade, e aqui, nós temos que ter, claro, um grande nível estandardização, a nível mundial, para que as coisas sejam equiparáveis dentro do grupo, mas com isso não podemos perder flexibilidade, e não podemos acomodarmo-nos com o facto de a ferramenta ser complexa e difícil de mudar através de um *Change Request* e mudar os nossos processos para nos adaptar à ferramenta. Não deve ser assim. A ferramenta é que se deve adaptar a nós, e não o contrário. E isto leva-me também, já agora só aqui uma questão que tinha ficado que queria complementar, que é a *corporate* fazer ou não o que é necessário para agilizar os processos, as ferramentas, tenho um exemplo muito concreto, que é o Controlo de Despedimento: nós pedimos varias vezes à *corporate* uma solução *standard* para o Controlo de Despedimento porque era algo que a o departamento de Auditoria estava constantemente a analisar, e a resposta da *corporate* foi que iriam fazer uma ferramenta mas deram um prazo de dois ou três anos. A nossa resposta foi que era impensável para nós esperar este tempo, por isso começamos a desenvolver uma solução local, em que literalmente foram duas pessoas a desenvolver a ferramenta, o colega no IT, e eu na especificação de requisitos, portanto isto demostra a facilidade ou não de desenvolver uma ferramenta não está na dimensão técnica, às vezes é a questão de ter a vontade e o OK para avançar, porque se realmente é necessário tem que se poder avançar e não se pode estar dois anos à espera de uma solução central, então

acabámos por criar a aplicação local, contra a central, eles reclamaram imenso de termos feito isso, mas teve que ser, porque não podemos estar tanto tempo à espera. E pronto, isto só mostra o que estava a dizer, que é: não podemos adaptar os nossos processos às ferramentas, as ferramentas é que têm que se adaptar a nós, em relação ao processo de Recrutamento e Seleção, para voltar à questão, neste momento e muito muito complexo, por essa questões com o sistema de dados de comunicação e o sistema de dado mestre por todos os dados necessários no *ticket* no Sistema de Pedidos, no ERP, por termos um prazo de 3 semanas, de acordo com o processo, para fazer o processo, quando sabemos que muitas vezes não é possível, não conseguimos começar o processo com 3 semanas de antecedência… pronto.

Q: Work Practices?

Not answered.

Q: Decentralization of decision processes?

Not answered.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

A:

No geral, também acho que é o caminho certo a seguir, no sentido em que os processos de desenvolvimento tornam-se mais homogéneos dentro do grupo a nível mundial, e aí acho que também faz sentido, mas também ainda temos alguns pontos a trabalhar e do feedback que tenho, nem sempre é claro para as chefias exatamente o que é que tem que fazer, e os próprios passos no formulário são algo complexos, ou seja, se pegarmos num exemplo prático, a avaliação de desempenho, que era feito na localização, por exemplo, aqui era um ficheiro em Excel com uma série de perguntas, a chefia avaliava as perguntas, o colaborador colocava os seus comentários e no final era colocada uma nota. Uma avaliação. Pronto, o processo mudou um pouco, agora já não é tão quantitativo, é mais qualitativo, mas em termos de passos do processo, há imensos passos. Ou seja, há a preparação, depois… sei que há uns 7 ou 8 passos até ao fim, em que o formulário passa de uns para outros, da chefia para o colaborador, para o HR Business Partner, para o colaborador de novo, e eu acho que a certo ponto, a chefia perde um pouco o fio à meada e não sabe se calhar porque não temos um sistema de notificações

muito bem desenvolvido, não sabem se já receberam o formulário ou não, não sabem qual é o próximo passo a fazer, por isso acho que no caso do Sistema de Avaliação de Desempenho, acho que foi uma melhoria, agora acho que é uma questão de amadurecer mais o processo, fazendo pequenas alterações com *change requests* que conseguimos fazer e se calhar apostar mais em formações aos colaboradores e chefias, acho que as pessoas ainda não sabem, e eu própria enquanto colaboradora, eu também não sei muito bem qual é o meu papel em cada processo. O que tenho que fazer. Acho que ainda não está muito claro. E como são processos que só se fazem apenas uma vez por ano, as pessoas esquecem-se, portanto tem que haver uma forma de as pessoas serem relembradas, mas que seja simples. Mas acho que segue um bom caminho.

Q: Training Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Career Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Benefits?

Already mentioned.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

Already answered.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: O essencial é… o que sinto é que prendemos muito os nossos processos devido às ferramentas, e devia ser o contrário, devíamos otimizar os nossos processos sabendo que as nossas ferramentas vão correr atrás, mas pronto, isso tem muitas vezes a ver com o tipo de ferramenta que é escolhido, e isso é uma decisão que vem sempre da central, e que se calhar é um ponto a ser visto com eles, que é, nem sempre as ferramentas mais robustas ou mais bem estabelecidas no mercado, nem sempre são as mais fáceis de usar ou adaptar. Mas

considerando que a empresa está presente em mais de 60 países em todo o mundo, e que certamente tem realidades muito diferentes em cada um, e que tem que ser ágil nesse sentido.

7 – National HR Coordinator – Portugal (2)

Q: Number of years working for the company:

A: Bem, eu comecei no dia 3 de Julho, portanto há pouco mais de um mês.

Q: Functional area:

A: Estou ainda a descobrir qual é o meu posicionamento. Isto porquê? Naturalmente, foi-me dado a conhecer o projeto, e as áreas principais de responsabilidade que tem aqui a componente que a colega falou, que envolve toda a parte da formação, e ainda mais uma colega de Espanha que está com uma área de suporte à área de HR IT, também de *reporting*.

Portanto neste momento, estou a tentar integrar-me em todos estes processos, portanto neste momento o detalhe possível de dar não é muito grande. Mas no fundo será essa responsabilidade, para liderar esta equipa e estas áreas.

Q: Main Responsibilities:

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Can you please explain in some sentences your professional career rand how it led you to your current responsibilities?

A: De forma...vou tentar ser resumido. Eu comecei o meu trabalho como advogado estagiário, porque eu sou licenciado em Direito, passei uma temporada como advogado estagiário mas a principal área de trabalho foi o Direito do Trabalho. Foi nessa altura que contactei com as áreas de Gestão e GRH, e que foi uma área que me interessou. Depois, comecei a carreira na área de GRH, primeiro em Lisboa, depois passei para um projeto internacional onde trabalhei em três países diferentes, entretanto voltei a Portugal, trabalhei na área da Banca de Investimento, sempre na área de GRH, e depois no setor das Tecnologias de Informação e agora estou nesta empresa. Portanto foi assim um percurso já com 10 anos, mas que de certa forma, sinto que o passo que dei, teve sempre muita relevância com o histórico, portanto, acho que não teria acontecido se não tivesse a experiência anterior.

Q: In which way your main area of responsibility is connected with strategic goals for HR IT within your organization? In this case, comment from your previous experiences.

A: Sim, no projeto internacional, eu era responsável de RH numa empresa do setor das tecnologias de informação, e era uma empresa que estava a crescer 100% ao ano, e em 7 anos chegou aos 500 colaboradores, mas devido ao facto de o crescimento ter sido tão significativo, toda a área de processos e infraestruturas, digamos assim, foi completamente… não diria menosprezado, mas secundário. E chegou uma altura em que a organização sentiu a necessidade de implementar algumas ferramentas para o controlo e organização. Com isto eu quero dizer que a empresa, quando avançamos com a implementação do ERP, a implementação de um portal do colaborador, associado a esse ERP. Eu fui o líder de Projeto com a diretora financeira para este projeto, e foi à dimensão, que não tem nada a ver com a nossa empresa, foi um projeto bastante complexo, mas que eu consigo perceber que estava completamente alinhado com aquilo que a organização pretendia. Porque a organização não pretendia uma ferramenta complexa, pretendia uma ferramenta simples, de utilização fácil, de interação muito simples e que fosse utilizada por todos. E daqui eu retiro o objetivo estratégico que a organização tinha, de ter uma ferramenta ágil, que as pessoas usassem, porque no fundo a ferramenta iria permitir o reporte de horas, o reporte de despesas, marcação de férias, de faltas, aquela informação mais básica que existe ao nível da GRH, que depois estaria alinhada com a parte financeira, de *reporting*, faturação, cobranças, etc., e portanto na origem tínhamos que ter uma ferramenta muito ágil, porque íamos passar de um cenário onde ninguém registava horas, para um cenário onde toda a gente tinha que registar horas. E se fossemos criar uma complexidade muito grande, à partida, as pessoas não iam submeter as horas, e portanto posso até dizer que numa fase inicial quando o projeto foi implementado, eram precisos cerca de 5 *clicks* para submeter uma *Timesheet* completa de um mês, porque era feito semanalmente, portanto, em 5 *clicks* era possível submeter esta informação. Uma das primeiras alterações que foram necessárias, foi alterar esta situação para dois *clicks*. Porque o feedback que recebemos – e estamos a falar de um target onde mais de 90% são consultores informáticos, portanto, o primeiro comentário era "Se tivesse feito eu tinha feito melhor" – e reduzimos de tal forma…

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e também, a redução e simplicidade do processo de aprovação, mas por trás disto tudo consigo perceber o alinhamento que existia, estratégico, da organização, com a simplicidade da ferramenta, coisa que eu, apesar de ter um mês na empresa, estou a sentir alguma dificuldade em integrar-me, e posso dar o meu exemplo, eu tenho uma determinada posição na organização, não é uma posição nova, eu ainda hoje não sei quais são os roles que têm que ser atribuídos, e diria que se calhar 85% dos roles que me deveriam ser atribuídos ainda não estão atribuídos… e já estou cá há mês e meio, praticamente. Estamos a falar de um mês se calhar mais parado, onde as pessoas estão de férias, etc., mas no limite, podia ter 80% da minha capacidade limitada por cause de uma ou várias ferramentas informáticas. O que, em parte compreendo, por toda a complexidade da organização, que não era o caso na minha organização anterior, mas acho que há um equilibro que deve ser reposto que creio que não existe atualmente.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of the whole HR IT concept throughout the years within your organization? In this case, comment from your previous experiences

A: Sim… comparando a primeira com a última, noto cada vez mais a importância das tecnologias de informação estarem associadas tanto à gestão de RH como às próprias necessidades do negócio. Mas nunca, em alguma organização que tenha trabalhado, passei por tantas dificuldades, em termos de HR IT, como passei por aqui, porque havia imagina, determinadas tarefas que era necessário fazer, que eram feitas de forma automática ou para cada admissão, e estava feito. Não havia esta… e também já trabalhei numa multinacional italiana, mas nunca na minha carreira tinha experienciado tanta complexidade a nível de HR IT. E uma dificuldade que também estou a ter na empresa é também perceber quem, no limite, é que tem o poder de decisão. Porque, imagina, numa alteração qualquer, que entendemos que é benéfica para qualquer processo, no limite, uma otimização que pode trazer poupança de tempo, e no limite, ser negócio, poupar dinheiro, etc., com toda esta complexidade de pedir alterações, esperar muito tempo para ter o feedback, esperar muito tempo para fazer testes, depois o custo é sempre elevadíssimo, quem é que, ou se seria necessário ter alguém no meio alguém que pudesse efetivamente fazer uma avaliação de… ok isto é útil para a organização ou não é útil para a organização, porque podemos estar a ignorar ferramentas que podem ser muito úteis na simplificação de um processo, pelo facto de ou terem um custo assombroso, ou de demorarem tanto tempo que quando chegamos ao ponto de obter feedback, se calhar a

realidade organizacional já é outra e a necessidade já pode ser outra, e a comparação que faço… e mais uma vez ressalvo sempre aqui a questão da dimensão, com o último projeto que tive, nos identificávamos uma necessidade, contactávamos o fornecedor, ele desenvolvia e fazia o orçamento, colocava numa plataforma de testes, nós validávamos e… nós tivemos desenvolvimentos que ao fim de 3 semanas estavam no portal disponíveis para toda a gente. E passou por uma fase de validação, orçamento, pagamento, testes, etc.,. Eu compreendo que é completamente diferente a organização e a estrutura, e não podemos ser nem 8 nem 800, que acho que é necessário encontrar aqui algum equilíbrio, porque no meio desta batalha, acho que das coisas que mais ouvi desde que cheguei à empresa foi a expressão: "*Change Request*", "muito tempo" e "muito caro", e outra coisa que também estou a perceber é que, mas isso é normal em qualquer projeto de implementação tecnológica, é a necessidade de melhorias, agora, se calhar a organização mundial não pretende dar muita margem a essa alterações, se calhar pertentem ter um produto mais compacto, igual para todos, para receberem a informação da mesma forma, mas isso causa vários constrangimentos a nível local que têm que têm que ter esse conhecimento. Por isso se calhar essa questão de ser muito caro e ser muito tempo, pode estar relacionada com o facto de ser muita gente a pedir à mesma equipa, alterações, ou pelo facto de a própria casa mãe não querer alterações ao que está implementado.

O objetivo estratégico deverá ser desenvolver uma plataforma completamente homogénea, ou por outro lado desenvolver uma ferramenta que seja ágil o suficiente para que, dentro de um *framework* geral, abarcar várias realidades locais?

Eu acho que tem que existir um fundo comum. Porque também é importante para uma organização que está distribuída por todos os continentes, ter informação que seja parametrizada de determinada forma para que a sua interpretação também seja mais fácil e comparável. Porque se não estamos a comparar informação europeia e sul-americana e asiática, com informação completamente diferente, nunca vais poder fazer uma avaliação completa. Tem que haver um nível de estandardização, e isso eu claro que compreendo perfeitamente, diria que entre 85 a 90% *standard,* agora, é preciso saber que a realidade local tem algumas especificidades que são importantes, da mesma forma que cada localização tem especificidades legais, também pode ter especificidades de negócio, que sejam importantes ter

em conta, portanto, se calhar é neste ponto que a empresa precisa de sentir ainda essa necessidade.

Q: Can you describe the evolution of HR IT activities / roles and ongoing projects throughout your organization?

Answered in previous question.

Q: Regarding the connection between HR IT and the Strategic HR Policies within your organization, how would you evaluate the evolution of the following HR Topics within your organization?

Q: Recruitment?

[In regards to the new e-Recruting tool] Daquilo que percebi, é um processo simples, é um produto que está a ser comprado, não é desenvolvido pela empresa, e vai de encontro às necessidades atuais de recrutamento, que são: simplicidade, mobilidade, e contacto com os candidatos. Portanto, garantir aqui uma coisa que nem sempre acontece nas grandes organizações, que é o permanente contacto com o candidato, e muitas vezes cria-se uma má imagem no mercado porque a empresa não dá feedback, ou quando dá feedback é um *e-mail* automático completamente frio que evita que a pessoa se candidate numa seguinte fase. A minha questão que ainda não percebi, mas vamos ter um *workshop* entretanto, por exemplo, a ferramenta podia ser uma boa oportunidade para simplificar o processo de integração de um colaborador, porque por exemplo, a informação básica, seja ela nome, nº de contribuinte, etc., já vai estar nessa plataforma, se calhar não havia necessidade de outro colaborador, quando é admitido, ter que pedir novamente esta informação, e esta ser registada novamente nos sistemas. Portanto, eu não sei se vai existir, acho que não está pensado, mas acho que poderia ser uma forma de evitar o trabalho manual, porque o candidato já vai introduzir esta informação na plataforma. É, portanto, uma forma de colocar as plataformas a colaborar entre si. Até porque há um ponto aqui que acho que é fundamental, que é: quem é que está ao serviço do quê. Porque se pensarmos em ultima análise, todos os produtos, todos os serviços são criados para corresponder a uma determinada necessidade, e a necessidade não pode ser exigida ou criada pela própria ferramenta. Ainda esta semana recebi um e-mail a perguntar: Queres ser bilionário? Resolve um problema de um bilião de pessoas. Agora, se nós com a

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implementação de uma ferramenta estamos a criar um problema para um bilião de pessoas, nós nunca vamos ser ágeis na resposta, portanto o produto ou o serviço não pode, ou não devia poder, definir as regras.

Q: The new e-Recruiting Tool is a step towards this approach?

A: Sim, daquilo que vi sim. Pelo menos a intenção é essa, fala-se muito do *candidate first*, portanto, logo aí está o *User Experience*, a simplicidade, muito presente, e no próprio *engagement*. E é aqui exatamente que temos que ter atenção, nós não podemos, não deveria acontecer, por exemplo, estar a criar um excelente *engagement* no recrutamento, que é o que se pretende com a ferramenta, e depois acontecer que ele é contratado e está duas semanas sem trabalhar porque as ferramentas não o permitem. E portanto, isto é um processo que tem que ser fluído, e portanto é aqui que também temos que trabalhar um bocado.

Q: Employees Performance Evaluation?

A: Aqui não vou poder acrescentar muito. Já vi a ferramenta, já li em parte os processos em si, mas não sei acrescentar grande coisa, mesmo comparando com outras organizações onde estive, era um processo mais manual, portanto não tínhamos assim uma ferramenta propriamente desenvolvida para estes processos.

Q: Training Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Career Development?

Answered in the previous question.

Q: Benefits?

Already mentioned.

Q: Still on the connection between HR IT Tools and HR Processes, would you say that overall the e-HRM concept was facilitating or complicating the HR Processes?

Already answered.

Q: What is your opinion on the future role of IT on HR Strategies on all organizations in general, and within your organization in particular?

A: A minha opinião vai no sentido de que a ferramenta é que se tem que adaptar ao processo. Acho que uma questão que também seria importante responder, mas parece-me bastante difícil, que é: quem é que é a organização. Porque falamos em responder às necessidades da organização, porque esse conceito pode ser muito local. Aqui pensamos na nossa localização, na Alemanha pensam na organização alemã, ou na empresa, 60, 70 países. Portanto, necessidades de quem? É uma pergunta um pouco difícil de responder, daí aquilo que falava de 85, 90% ser *standard*. E atenção que esta percentagem não tem nenhum estudo por trás, é só um feeling, mas ter aqui alguma flexibilidade para da mesma forma que há flexibilidade para implementar questões legais, questões de processos locais que sejam importantes. Agora, acho que a *standard* também já percebeu que há determinados casos em que vai ter que melhorar. Mas como é uma organização muito grande, as mudanças são muito lentas, e mudar um navio deste tamanho em alto mar, nós precisamos de alterar já para verificarmos que efetivamente está a mudar de direção daqui a 2 anos.