

The Relevance and Effectiveness of Adaptation Measures in Russian and Foreign Companies

A.I. Tikhonov¹, and V.G. Konovalova^{2*}

*Corresponding author: vg_konovalova@guu.ru.

¹ Moscow Aviation Institute (National Research University), Moscow, Russia

² State University of Management, Moscow, Russia

Abstract. This article discusses current issues related to the adaptation of new employees in enterprises. Previously most companies did not attach serious importance to this, but over the past 20 years the use of adaptation programs as an effective personnel management tool has grown markedly in the world and Russian markets. We consider the main problems of creating and using new adaptation programs in the practice of Russian and foreign companies, because competent adaptation of personnel allows us to simplify the comfortable entry of new employees into the team and to ensure increased labor productivity. As a result of creating favorable psychological and social conditions, the goals of an individual person and the entire professional group come closer together.

Keywords: HR management, employee adaptation, adaptation program, talent management.

1 Introduction

Since the 2000s the process of adapting new employees has become an important part of working with staff in many large companies. By 2008 among large companies in North America, UK and the Asia-Pacific region – one of the most economically developed regions in the world – 62% had a developed system for adapting newcomers, and in 2009 this share was estimated at 77% [1]. In Russia the high penetration rate of adaptation programs on the market was achieved in the next decade: in 2017, 76% of companies used a formal adaptation program in one form or another among Russian companies. Among large companies (with a staff of more than 1 thousand people), the share of firms using adaptation programs in the Russian market is even higher at 86% [2].

2 Problem Statement

To date the process of adaptation of beginners is one of the basic in working with staff. At the same time the adaptation programs themselves can vary greatly from company to company, and by no means do they always correspond to the needs of business or applicants. These problems as well as general aspects of building adaptation programs are considered in the article.

Investments in adaptation programs are beneficial for employers for several reasons. According to statistics, in the United States, workers aged 18 to 37 change on average 10 jobs each, and a significant proportion of staff turnover falls on the employees working in the company for the first year [1]. The departure of a newly hired employee not only forces the company to spend money on finding and hiring a new specialist, but also reduces the productivity of existing staff. After hiring another candidate, employees again have to spend time getting to know and helping a novice, sacrificing the performance of work duties. The presence of adaptation programs directly affects staff turnover in the company – according to a study conducted in Poland, the inclusion of employees in a well-thought-out adaptation program increases the likelihood that they will remain in the company for the next three years by 69% [3].

A study conducted in 2000 by the Harvard University showed that up to 80% of staff turnover in companies can be explained by errors in hiring and in the process of adapting new employees [1]. At the same time, the adaptation process is not obliged to be limited only to the introduction of the employee into the work team at the beginning of his work. Many researchers in the field of personnel management see in adaptation programs a tool whose final purpose is to achieve the maximum level of productivity from the employee in the shortest possible time elapsed since hiring [1]. That is why the duration of adaptation programs can stretch for up to 90 days and go far beyond interacting with a new employee of the HR department, including his colleagues and the leadership in the active work with newcomers. According to a survey conducted by a researcher at Irish National College on the issue of employee adaptation in large international companies with offices in Dublin, 63% of HR managers in large companies refuse to consider adaptation programs to be exclusively an HR tool, calling it rather a general business tool. At the same time, all 100% of the HR managers surveyed agreed that this tool is important for the company [1].

Adaptation programs may include not only the technical part of acquainting an employee with new information, but also immersion in the corporate environment - familiarization with the corporate culture and values of the company, getting to know the team in an informal setting (up to participating in joint informal activities), constant feedback with

leadership on progress in fulfilling work tasks (the rule is widely known according to which a new employee needs to be given feedback on his success through not share, month and three months of work). A structured and balanced process of adaptation makes employees happier and more involved in the work process. A hired job seeker not only feels suitable for a new job, but also feels a sense of belonging to the goals and strategy of the employer, which affects his productivity [2, 3, 4]. Thus the process of adaptation of newcomers directly affects not only the company's expenses on personnel, but also on its income by increasing the productivity of the team.

3 Research Questions

Among the companies that do not have an adaptation program (as mentioned above, there are 24% of those on the Russian market), the most frequent reason for refusing to use them is the lack of corresponding need - this is the opinion of 33% of those companies that do not have adaptation programs at all. The same number of companies consider the main reason the lack of the necessary human resources for the implementation of the program (that is, there is no person in the team who could take on this responsibility) [2].

19% of HR managers surveyed admitted that they lacked a budget or that their management was opposed. 14% have no understanding of how to organize the process of adaptation of beginners. Thus, the resources for introducing adaptation programs on the Russian market can hardly be called completely exhausted, and in the future the prevalence of using this tool may increase [5].

4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of various adaptation measures. We consider the main problems of creating and using new adaptation programs in the practice of Russian and foreign companies. The choice of the purpose of the study is determined by the fact that competent adaptation of the personnel makes it possible to simplify the comfortable entry of new employees into the team and to ensure increased labor productivity.

5 Research Methods

Not all employees of a certain company can go through adaptation programs. In a survey conducted by Head Hunter among applicants and employers in the Russian labor market, respondents were asked to choose the options for implementing adaptation programs that were present in their work practice. The survey results showed that on average, employers chose more options than job seekers - this was reflected in the higher popularity rates of each of the answer options in the employer rating compared to the job applicant rating. For example, only 30% of applicants said they had experienced an introductory briefing on corporate rules, while among companies, 91% said that they had such a briefing (of those applicants and employers in whose practice, in principle, adaptation programs were present). This difference can be explained not only by the selectivity in using adaptation programs for different categories of personnel, but also by the difference in the perception of adaptation measures - a conversation with a manager about corporate rules can be perceived by an employee as informal, but at the same time be part of the manager's real responsibilities [5].

In foreign companies, the attitude of employees towards adaptation programs on average is more positive than in Russian [6, 7]. According to a survey conducted by an employee of the Irish National College among employees of large financial international companies, 26% of employees consider their employer's effective adaptation program to be 64% more effective [1]. Thus 80% of specialists recognize the effectiveness of the existing adaptation program, which is more than an indicator of the effectiveness of any of the adaptation measures in the opinion of Russian applicants [5].

Russian employers and applicants recognize mentoring as the most effective adaptation measure (99% and 75% approving, respectively) [5]. The practice of mentoring can have a different meaning: the most widespread practices are referred to in English as buddy-programs, that is, formalized programs to help an employee painlessly join the team from a specially selected colleague.

According to a survey by the Irish National College, 75% of companies have corresponding elements in their adaptation programs (68% of respondents among applicants have encountered them). Elements of mentoring and coaching in foreign companies are much less common - they are present in only 12% of those companies that have adaptation programs. But among the applicants, 53% came across elements of mentoring - this suggests that the transfer of directly working knowledge is also a common practice in the process of mentoring, although it may be less obligatory and formalized. Coaching turned out to be a rare occurrence in the experience of applicants as well - only 15% experienced it [1].

In Russian realities, the practice of helping an employee with adaptation in the team is accompanied by training in working skills even more often. So 76% of applicants and 89% of employers (of those who have come across adaptation programs) explain mentoring as the transfer of practical professional skills related to work responsibilities. At the same time 65% of applicants and 85% of employers see in mentoring the practice of explaining the general corporate processes of work related to internal systems of interaction, the use of special programs, and so on. And only 55% of applicants and 72% of employers recognize the mentor as the duty of general support for a novice - notification

of the unspoken rules of the team, assistance in resolving everyday issues, and so on [5]. Thus the teaching aspect is expressed in Russian mentoring programs more than social or psychological.

6 Findings

The importance of adaptation programs is obvious to the vast majority of Russian job seekers and employers. Adaptation programs turn out to be widespread in the global and Russian markets, but the quality of programs in Russian companies far from always meets the requirements of applicants. One way to solve the problem of discrepancies between the requests of applicants and the wishes of employers is to build a feedback system with employees. In foreign companies, 62% of companies have a feedback system with newcomers (from those who, in principle, practice the use of adaptation programs) [1]. It is the presence of feedback that makes it possible to better adapt adaptation programs to the needs of applicants and to avoid the repetition of errors during adaptation.

Employers should pay more attention to the socialization practices of new employees – this is the aspect that is the main one in many large companies from technological sectors that practice adaptation programs [8, 9]. Practices such as introducing new tools for newcomers to communication (from digital chats or websites to premises allocated inside the office), conducting joint events (joint athletic competitions or obligatory distribution of coffee with donuts by newly arrived employees are real cases of US companies [1]), the extension of the adaptation program for up to three months: all this contributes to the retention of staff and the speedy bringing of the productivity of new employees to the maximum level of productivity.

7 Conclusion

In a situation where the labor market is increasingly dependent on job seekers rather than employers – and this is precisely the direction in which the labor market in Russia has been moving in recent decades – companies have to allocate additional funds in order to retain staff, search for and hire talented employees. The importance of adaptation measures in organizations that face these problems most often (for example, in such technology-intensive industries as IT or banking) should encourage employers to pay more attention to progressive and team-based working methods, including with new employees.

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