

Shaping the relationship between the employer and former employees

Summary of the doctoral dissertation:

Derecruitment, perceived as a process of parting with employee, is the last stage of an employee's life cycle in an organization. Often, though erroneously, it is also understood as the last stage of the relationship between the employer and the employee. Meanwhile, the departure of employee from a company does not have to, or should not be, reduced to a total break of relations between these two entities.

It should be noted that, referring to the theory of social exchange (Homans 1961; Tittenbrun 1981), maintaining relations between the employer and former employees may be beneficial for both of them (Зaxaпoba 2007; Sertoglu, Berkowitch 2002). Awareness of that benefits existence is an important stage in creating activities conducive to shaping positive relationship with employees. Programs dedicated to the former employees (*corporate alumni program*) have such global companies as: Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, McKinsey&Company, EY, PricewaterhouseCoopers or KPMG. Meanwhile, studies conducted in this area, although not many, indicate that most organizations do not have a strategy for maintaining relations with former employees (Lightspeedresearch 2017).

The research problem of the dissertation concerns factors determining the shaping of the relations between the employer and former employees. In particular, the author was interested in: how to encourage employees and employers to maintain relationships after the employee leaves the organization and how to manage these relationships, to ensure benefits for both sides. **The aim of the dissertation** was to create a model for shaping the relations between the employer and former employees.

The results of the literature analysis indicate a cognitive gap which exists in Polish literature in the area of shaping the relationship between the employer and former employees. The desire to fill in this gap and carried out a reconnaissance allowed the author to frame the following research questions:

Q1: Do Polish employers maintain relations with former employees? If so, what are these relationships? If not, what is the reason?

Q2: What kind of expectations for mutual relationships have ex-employees after the leaves the organization?

Q3: What kind of actions, undertaken by employers, can facilitate shaping relationships with former employees?

The main goal of the research was therefore the identification and characterization of factors determining the shaping of relations between employers and former employees. Based on the analysis of literature, the following main thesis was put forward: difficulties in shaping relations with former employees result from the attitudes and actions of employers regarding these relations.

In order to comprehensively describe the phenomenon studied, the triangulation of research methods was used. The research was carried out in three stages:

1. Preliminary qualitative research - focus interviews with representatives of companies responsible for the implementation of personnel policy and with former employees;
2. Basic quantitative research carried out with the help of an online survey (CAWI) carried out among former employees;
3. Supplementary qualitative research - semi-structured interviews conducted with former employees.

Based on the analysis of the literature and the results of preliminary research, an original questionnaire was developed, which was used in the second stage of the research.

The results of the survey allowed to verify the following **hypotheses**:

H1: In the opinion of former employees, employers treat groups leaving organizations as homogeneous (they do not differentiate approaches to employees due to the reasons for their leaving from the company and their different expectations in relation to further relations);

H2: In the opinion of former employees, employers do not treat the parting with the employee (circumstances that parting process, for example, separation atmosphere) as a factor determining the relationship between the employer and former employees.

The content of dissertation was presented in five chapters. The first and second chapters have the theoretical nature and the other chapters have the empirical nature. In the first chapter, derecruitment as a personal sub-function was discussed. Moreover this chapter also presented the reasons for the employee's leaving the organization and presented the results of the parting

for both entities. The second chapter of the dissertation was devoted to the relations between the employer and employees, with particular emphasis on the concept of employee relationship management. In addition, this chapter discusses the relationship between the employee and the employer in the context of the theory of social exchange, as well as the assumptions and examples of programs for shaping relations with former employees.

In the third chapter of the dissertation, research procedure adopted by the author was justified. This chapter presents the descriptions of the methodology and the results of preliminary and quantitative researches. The fourth chapter presents the methodology and results of qualitative research. The fifth chapter is devoted to the integration of research material. It presents the conclusions from the research and shows a model for shaping the relationship between the employer and former employees.