

The Impact of Building Coaching and Mentoring Strategies on the Human Resources Sustainable Development

Micu Angela-Eliza

"Ovidius" University of Constanța

angelaelizamicu@yahoo.com

Popa Daniel

"Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați

popadaniel.central@yahoo.com

Abstract

"Everyone needs a mentor". (Clutterbuck, 2001). We consider that David Clutterbuck's statement emphasizes an obvious reality of the 21st century. In view of the current economic context, especially the human resources global crisis and the continuous technological evolution whose direct effect is the creation of permanent training needs by the accumulation of new knowledge and working methods, one might state that mentoring and coaching mitigate the created human resources shortage.

Key words: coaching, mentoring, strategies, human resources

J.E.L. classification: E24, J21, J24, M12, M53

1. Introduction

Below we shall analyse the Romanian labour market and attempt to highlight the impact of implementing coaching and mentoring strategies within the context of the human resources global crisis, the year 2018 representing a true challenge among the organizations from the viewpoint of recruiting and keeping skilled employees. (Train Your Brain *et al*, 2018)

Mentoring is not a new notion. Informally, this relation has always existed within the organizations. Yet, the notion grew in popularity at the middle of the 1970s – when it was considered just another training means. In the 1980s, this concept significantly evolved, being considered another knowledge transmission vehicle within the organizations from one generation to another. Thus, mentoring got to be perceived as a process-oriented relation while initially it was viewed as a product-oriented model. More precisely, it evolved from the idea of knowledge transfer to a process involving knowledge acquisition, its application and critical consideration. (Zachary, 2005, p.2)

Meanwhile, technology evolved very much, at present Internet and globalization being key components in the development of organizations. Considering this aspect, one might state that these determine the success, in the 21st century a dynamic, expanding space being created, which involves making decisions at a faster rate and in the shortest possible time.

Within the small-sized organisations, nowadays managers no longer have just job-specific duties. They acquired the role of trainers, coaches, mentors, perform recruitment activities etc. That is why, the development of coaching and mentoring programs plays an increasingly more important role at this level. The direct effect of implementing a coaching and mentoring program is emphasized by the fact that managers get to have more time, being able to focus their resources on more important aspects or other priorities because employees become less dependent on them.

The idea of having an efficient activity raises serious issues within the large-sized organizations. In the case of those organizations having different work points or that apply the "work from home" concept, obtaining effective results is difficult without adequate instruments. In this case, the objective of coaching and mentoring is to transform the group into a team because this is the way in

which the organization can obtain maximum productivity. The team is a complex group where individuals influence themselves in order to accomplish the organizations' objectives.

In the case of implementing coaching programs within the teams, coaches' task is to develop the performance of both the team and of each individual. Then, the use of certain principles and methods typical to the performance management become necessary, which is a difficult aspect for certain coaches. (MTD Training, 2013, p.25)

Emphasizing the human resources migration as a direct effect of the free circulation of the workforce in the European space, we might state that the coaching and mentoring strategies must be tuned to the economic, social and political context. Thus, those who emigrated enter a wide shadowing process, they super specialize and obtain results in the destination countries. Despite all that, when they return to their space of origin, they cannot obtain the estimated results, encountering cultural, social, economic, perception barriers etc.

2. Theoretical background

Gerard Olivero, K. Denise Bane and Richard E. Kopelman, further to a study conducted at the Barruch College, found that the training programs lead to the increase of productivity by 22%. When coaching programs are added, productivity increases up to 88%. (Olivero *et al*, 1997)

Eric Parsloe and Melville Leedham describe the general coach-mentoring process as having the following stages:

- analysis – in order to become aware of need and desire. The coach-mentoring process can start only when the subjects become aware of the need to improve their own performances. Without recognizing the need and desire change is impossible;
- planning – for the own responsabilization. Success is considered to be reached only when the subject assumes the own responsibility for the obtained results. During this stage occurs the opportunity of making oneself responsible;
- implementation – by using different styles, techniques and skills. The success of the implementation of the coaching and mentoring strategies arises from the styles and techniques that are friendly to the environment the subject performs his/her activity into;
- assessment – for success and learning. This stage involves both the coach-mentor, the subject and any other interested parties within the organization. (Parsloe *et al*, 2009, p.21-25)

Lois Zachary adds up and states that the feedback's role in this process is critical. The feedback in itself creates relations, opening new communication opportunities, stimulates participation, breaks barriers, encourages persons and creates a continuous interest and awareness. (Zachary, 2005, p.239)

Therefore, we might assert that the results of the coaching and mentoring processes produce effects not only in agreement with the initial purpose they were implemented but they contribute to a continuous, bidirectional development that has outcomes both in the organization's internal environment – the workplace, as well as in the external environment – the daily lives of the people, by developing their capacities.

3. Methodology

In this study a typical statistical method was used as research method. Based on the data collected from Romania's 2017 Statistical Yearbook, a cohort longitudinal retrospective research could be achieved – a term introduced for the first time by Karl Mannheim. In Elliot's opinion, this type of research offers a dynamic image that highlights phenomena evolution in time. (Elliott *et al*, 2008). Thus, the intention was to obtain results by exploring various cohorts along the temporal variable. (Mason *et al*, 2001)

4. Findings

Data regarding immigration and emigration was collected according to Table no. 1 underlying the graph in Figure no. 1. The workforce deficit was subsequently calculated for the period between 2013 and 2016.

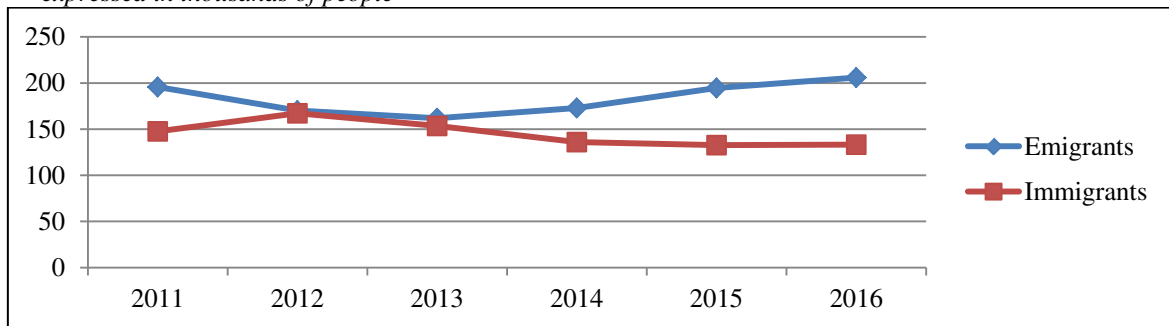
Table no 1. The flow of emigrants and immigrants caused by the change of the usual residence expressed in thousands of people

Year	Emigrants	Immigrants
2011	195.6	147.7
2012	170.2	167.3
2013	161.8	153.6
2014	172.9	136.0
2015	194.7	132.8
2016	205.9	133.2

Source: Table processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 51)

As it may be seen, emigration represents a significant problem for the Romanian workforce market, as the number of the immigrants cannot compensate the flow of the emigrants, a workforce deficit being thus created.

Figure no 1. The flow of emigrants and immigrants caused by the change of the usual residence expressed in thousands of people



Source: Chart processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 51)

It may be seen that in the years 2012 and 2013 the indicators maintained a constant trend, values being relatively close. As of 2014, the emigrants' trend grew, the graph slope being steeper than in the case of the immigrants. The deficit started off with 8,200 people in 2013 and reached 76,300 people in 2016, the total deficit calculated for the period 2013-2016 being of 183,300 people.

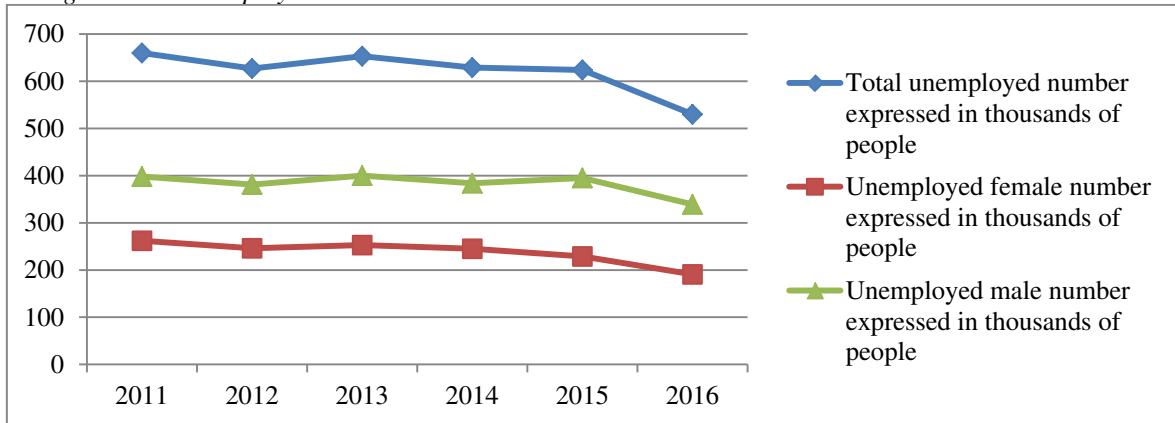
Table no 2. Unemployment data

Year	Total unemployed number expressed in thousands of people	Unemployed female number expressed in thousands of people	Unemployed male number expressed in thousands of people	Unemployment female rate	Unemployment male rate
2011	660	262	398	6.5	7.7
2012	627	246	381	6.1	7.4
2013	653	253	400	6.3	7.7
2014	629	245	384	6.1	7.3
2015	624	229	395	5.8	7.5
2016	530	191	339	5.0	6.6

Source: Table processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 120)

Analysing Figure no. 1 and Figure no. 2 in parallel, we find that in 2013, the graphs display an inflexion, a trend change. As organizations face the issue of staff recruitment on a shrinking market, they resort to the measure of recruiting workforce from amongst the unemployed, who do not always meet the performance criteria.

Figure no. 2. Unemployment data



Source: Chart processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 120)

In Table no. 3 the Gross nominal income (GNI) is detailed in order to highlight the increase in wages in order to attract the workforce.

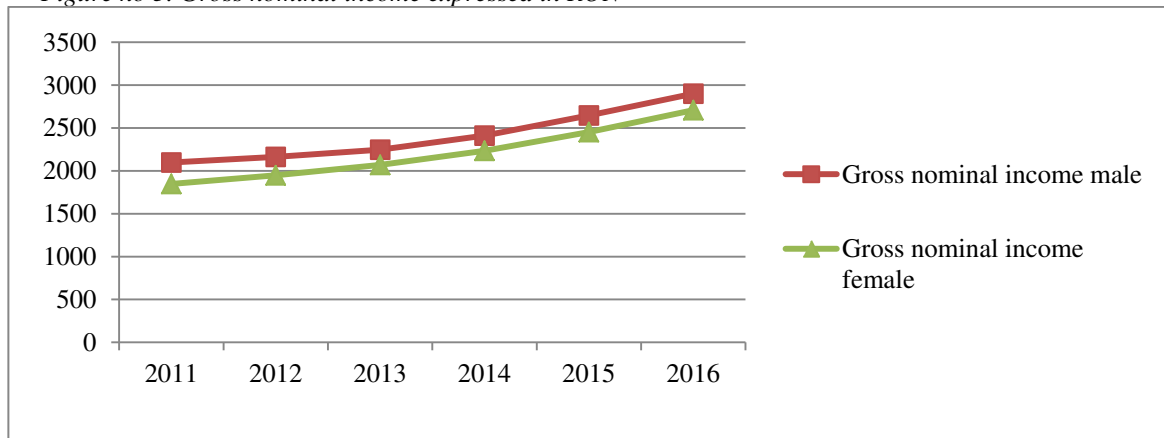
Table no. 3. Gross nominal income expressed in RON

Year	Gross nominal income for males	Gross nominal income for females
2011	2098	1848
2012	2163	1948
2013	2246	2070
2014	2412	2234
2015	2646	2453
2016	2900	2707

Source: Table processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 182)

In Figure no. 3 the year 2013 appears to be special as it outlines an increasing trend in the average nominal wage.

Figure no. 3. Gross nominal income expressed in RON



Source: Chart processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 182)

At a deeper analysis of the unemployment phenomenon, in Table no. 4 there is summarized the data referring to the unemployment rate by age, gender and environment groups in the year 2016. Thys, it may be seen that the most vulnerable segment in the case of unemployment is represented by the people aged 15 to 24 years, gender having little influence, while the decisive factor is the residence environment.

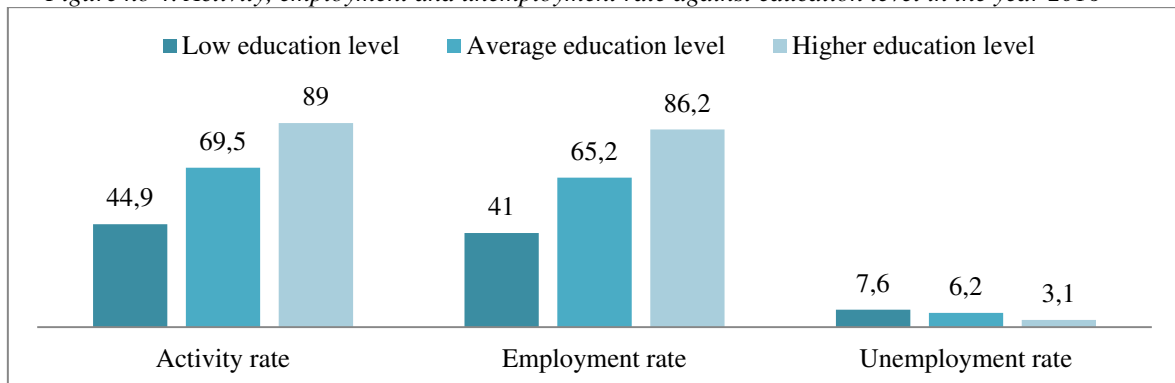
Table no 4. Unemployment rate by age, gender and residence group in 2016

	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	> 55 years
male	19.9	8.1	5.4	4.7	3.3
female	21.5	6.3	3.5	3.5	1.8
urban	24.9	6.6	4.3	4.0	3.5
rural	18.3	8.5	5.0	4.5	1.9

Source: Table processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 119)

In the end, analysing the workforce market from the viewpoint of studies, Figure no. 4 shows that the activity and employment rate increase directly proportional with the education level while unemployment rate has an inversely proportional trend compared to the education level.

Figure no 4. Activity, employment and unemployment rate against education level in the year 2016



Source: Chart processed by the authors (National Institute of Statistics, 2018, 121)

5. Conclusions

We consider that for a sustainable development of human resources, adequate coaching and mentoring strategies have to be implemented in correlation with the needs of the target people.

From the age criterion study arises that the most sensitive segment as to unemployment is that of the people aged 15 to 34 years.

In parallel it has been considered that the unemployment rate is high among the people with low and average education level, especially those residing in the urban environment.

Knowing the fact that only 25% of the 8th grade teenagers are interested in attending the classes of technological high schools or vocational schools (Constantinescu, 2018) we might state that a strategy needs to be applied starting with the secondary school classes by unfolding specialized programs. In this case, by implementing effective mentoring programs, the proper guidance of the students who want to drop studies or emigrate might be achieved. Within three, maximum four years they would acquire a qualification, in which case significant progress would be achieved as to the decrease of unemployment among the people with low and average education level.

As to the graduates of technological high schools and vocational schools, whose basic skills in the qualification field are formed, their integration in these coaching programs becomes convenient in order to provide them with continuous training, at least by the age of 24, at most 34 years, with the purpose of reducing the unemployment rate on the age segment until 34 years.

In parallel, mentoring programs must be applied among the young attending higher studies, for guidance purposes – in the first stage, followed by coaching programs – in the second stage, for improvement.

Mentoring-ulis based on a personal relationship while coaching is based on a professional relationship. (MTD Training, 2013, p.8). Considering the two aspects, we emphasize the need of implementing mentoring programs during studies, subsequently completed by coaching programs during the professional activity.

In the case of mentoring we might refer to a general objective, related to life while the coaching refers to strictly professional aspects. (MTD Training, 2013, p.8). Thus, the beneficiaries of these programs initially become confident and stable, key elements for a quality training. Subsequently

they managed to develop their own skills in order to obtain professional performances.

In Table no. 4 we notice that the unemployment rate is highest on the age segment in which people accumulate knowledge by study and not by actually working. Thus, we emphasize the need to create mentoring and coaching programs specially adapted for the young.

This study considered the fact that the unemployment rate is only affected by the inadequate qualification of the workforce. The answer to solving this problem from this viewpoint is to implement concrete coaching and mentoring strategies. Obviously, the unemployment problem is not strictly related to mentoring and coaching. Studies must be made in order to identify other factors one might act upon, with the simultaneous implementation of coaching and mentoring strategies in order to obtain the desired result. We also consider that an additional study should be conducted that should quantify the effective contribution of the implementation of such strategies to the decrease of the unemployment rate. Therewith, studies are required that should concretely identify the changes brought about by the implementation at macroeconomic level of the coaching and mentoring strategies on segments other than unemployment.

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