

# THE ROLE OF TRAINING IN ORGANIZATIONAL AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Daniela Roxana VUȚĂ\*  
daniela.vuta@uamsibiu.ro

Alina FĂRCAȘ\*\*  
alina.farcas90@yahoo.com

\*Alma Mater University, Sibiu, Romania

\*\*Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

## ABSTRACT

*The rapid transfer towards a knowledge society characterized by extensive changes and innovation has determined the need to extend the educational act to a lifelong process. Thus, it became obvious that the education provided by the educational institutions can no longer be a sufficient condition for the development of individual performance, needed to successfully confront the challenges of contemporary society. The concept of lifelong learning became a cumulative term of two essential requirements of the modern person: "learning to learn" and "continuously improving yourself". The successful application of adult learning principles and specific methods have shown some undeniable social and economic realities regarding their benefits, recalling here better opportunities for civic participation, improving health and individual existence, greater employment opportunities and a higher job quality.*

*Considering these aspects, this paper aims to highlight the importance of adult education through training programs, taking into account the role that economic organizations play with regard to continuous training of employees, especially in terms of their personal development, ensuring satisfaction at work and competitiveness on the labour market.*

**KEYWORDS:** *education, training, human resources, management, knowledge-based society*

## 1. Introduction

Education is one of the areas that has developed simultaneously with the evolution of human society and registered fundamental changes throughout its evolution. The contemporary society and the challenges of

this may pose for human and education, led to the emergence and generalization of concepts such as continuing education, adult education, parenting, self-learning and global education.

Education and training, whether it takes place in a formal or informal environment, it is a prerequisite for adults to their career and personal development. Hence, continuous professional learning becomes important in its contribution to support the transformation of the workforce, being the main instrument through which it can adapt to new requirements and facilitating mobility between different sectors. The acquisition of knowledge and skills helps improving each employee place on the labor market, while also leading to increase their productivity [1].

This study starts from the assumption that, on the Romanian training services market, there is a reduced demand coming from small and medium sized enterprises, in terms of employee training. Moreover, this study aims to provide several courses of action to increase awareness among companies regarding the role of training for employees and the organization as a whole.

## **2. The Training Programme as the Main Professional Learning Method**

Adult education is designed to develop not only knowledge, skills and abilities, but also work-related skills defined as functional, vocational origin, formational and experiential, useful in specific situations [2].

Skills development of professional nature, viable and enforceable in an efficient way in the context of a knowledge-based economy and society represents a desideratum of the education system and professional training for adults. Such a system must also ensure the increase of employability, adaptability and mobility of labor, addressing the companies' needs of skilled labor.

When we talk about continuous training it is necessary to consider its main beneficiaries, namely: the individual participant in the training, the company where he is employed, the community as a whole and, not least, the people who are part of the education system. In the context of adult integration in the labor market, continuous

training is designed to provide professional stability and access to employment, being an instrument necessary to respond best possible to the changes in demand for new qualifications.

Therefore, continuing vocational training is inextricably linked to the economic organizations, these becoming a source of support and promoting the learning for adults. It is known that the European Union encourages organizations to become learning organizations, namely that stimulate learning at all its levels. The need for such behavior from companies is duly justified by a competitive economic environment in which knowledge management has become not only a resource for survival and economic efficiency, but also an important competitive advantage [3].

In Romania, the Labor Code (Law no. 53/2003) [4] has specific provisions on vocational training in economic organizations, stipulating the obligation of companies to form professional staff once every two years (or every three years for companies with few employees).

According to this analysis in programming European Funds in Romania, 2014-2020, the measure proved not to have the expected impact because the continuous training of the employee is not addressed in accordance with its actual training needs, but on the opportunities (related to the cost) offered by the training services market [5]. The same analysis revealed that, although there was an increase in the number of participants in such programs, there is no effective correlation between project objectives for employee training and skill requirements requested in the labor market [5]. Also, the impact of training courses or updating/ upgrading of skills programs is low due to the employee's non-involvement in the decision to follow that training or the lack of learning strategies and correlation between employees needs for new skills and organizational goals [5].

Providing lifelong learning by Romanian economic organizations, regardless of the field of activity is obviously becoming a necessity, taking into account a sum of independent factors that will stimulate the demand for best skills and more suited to the current economic context, namely:

- Globalization process, together with an intensification of international trade.
- Requirements of the transition to an economy with low emissions of carbon dioxide
- Continuous development of technologies, particularly in the IT field.
- Changes in organization of work, determined by technological changes and the need of improving skills.

Each economic organization has its own strategies on how to invest in human resources, in order to develop it from a professional perspective. In some companies, professional training of employees holds a great importance so these companies have their own employees training centres. In other organizations concerned about the professional development of its employees, their management cooperates with various institutions, either to obtain information on training opportunities or to conduct effective training programs for employees.

The notion of training comes from English, being used as such in Romanian. According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, the concept of training is defined as: “the process of teaching or being taught the skills for a particular job or activity” [6].

From the point of view of its methods and organization, the training program must meet absolutely all the specific features of a program for adult education. Within an organization, we can find on the job or off the job training programs.

### **3. The Importance of Training for the Employees and the Organization**

As was stated previously, the training is unquestionably related to adult’s professional activity and also to the organizations where

adults are operating. The main role of a training program is to ensure personal development and organizations have a vital role in fulfilling this role. Moreover, career development has become a necessity nowadays, due to the need of the individual professional performance and the need to survive in an increasingly competitive labor market. We can talk about career development both in the context of an organization and in the case of people who change jobs.

Among the beneficial effects that a training program may generate for adult participants, from their perspective of being employees in an organization, we can mention:

- the increase of the quality process of communication with superiors and colleagues;
- assuming new responsibilities on the job;
- improving teamwork ability;
- efficiency of time management;
- improving the quality of workplace results;
- increase the chances of promotion;
- development of workplace initiative etc.

Currently, the process of identifying the employees training needs is the proof of the importance that an organization’s management attaches to the professional development of human resources, in order to increase productivity, workplace satisfaction or promotion. But simply identifying the training needs is not a sufficient condition, being required also the making of this process with effective measures to support the professional development of employees. Thus, the organizations providing a high level of labor productivity and satisfaction at work can be done by assessing training needs and professional development of employees and by providing financial resources for their participation in training programs, according to their needs or individual interests.

Since the early years of the training in Romania it was perceived by organizations rather as a short-term intervention, an

involuntary response to changes in the organizational context. Even today, economic reality has shown that when firms face financial problems, one of the areas most affected by budget cuts is the personnel training.

This is explained by the fact that for many Romanian managers, training for employees is not an investment but an expense, given that some of these managers turn to a training program only when the company is facing a certain problem, hoping for a miraculous rescue after learning that course. Maybe that is why training is often associated with multinational organizations, which have financial resources to invest in training and also an organizational culture specific to developed countries, understanding that investing in training and human resource development returns in the form of profit in the organization [7].

As has been emphasized throughout this study, training programs are important for human resources in organizations (given the need for lifelong learning and continuous professional education) and for economic organizations (in terms of competitiveness resources, progress and economic advantage).

However, the economic reality of our country and studies conducted by various specialists in the field of training shows a low interest from managers (especially SMEs) to this aspect. Economic reality has shown many times that Romanian managers of small and medium enterprises do not attach sufficient importance to personnel training activity. Some of the reasons for this situation, selected from the interviews identified in the economic press, are as follows: [8]

- Employee training is not justified because they leave the company later.
- During the training program, employees do not work properly, thus affecting production.
- Employees can learn “on the fly” from senior management, which no longer justify organizing a training program.

– The organization has no employee training plan or the plan is incomplete.

However, many business organizations providing training programs of interest to employees implement these programs in an unplanned and unsystematic way, without relying on the existence of a training plan or designing a human resource training activities in an unreasonable or ineffective way [9].

To strengthen the statements above, in the framework of a descriptive research carried out among managers of small and medium enterprises in Brasov, which aimed to identify their behaviors toward employee training programs concluded that this approach is not yet a priority for SME management. This situation is due mainly to the approach that managers have towards the idea of training, being viewed strictly in terms of the costs, given that some of these managers turn to a training program only when the company is facing an issue, hoping for an immediate and effective result after following that course [10].

#### **4. Recommendations on Increasing Awareness Among Companies Towards the Role of Training for Employees and the Organization**

Economic reality has shown many times that a company does not become competitive only by reducing the number of employees or by reducing remaining employee salaries in some cases, but by increasing the performance of company employees. Reducing the number of employees and cutting the salaries produces some short-term positive effects in the income and expenses budget of the company, raising profitability, but on the long-term, the effect may be the opposite, as a result of lower sales.

Therefore, identification of training needs of employees is proof of the importance that an organization’s management attaches to the professional development of human resources in order to increase productivity, workplace satisfaction or promotion to a higher position. Moreover, the training

activity is not only a survival strategy, due to its potential to make the difference between performing companies and those that are in bankruptcy. Training becomes more than building skills and knowledge of each individual on the team, being one of the paths to success.

Human resources development through training programs has a strategic role not only in equipping employees with skills so as to achieve the performance requirements of the organization, but also in because it has an extremely important role in shaping a business strategy. The main processes involved in human resources development are as follows: training and personal development, performance focused management and resourcing. In this context, the trainer becomes the one who sets the tone for a change, from a reactive organization in a pro-active learning organization. He is the one who can act for this goal, having access to top management where strategic decisions are being made.

Continuous training of adults and thus, training in organizations is a process that must be supported both at enterprise level as well as at macroeconomic level, involving all decision-making institutions in stimulating continuous professional training, as well acting as social partners in connecting education and training with labor market performance.

In terms of organization, we consider to be a priority the activity of identifying the employees training needs, as a proof of the importance that an organization's management attaches to the professional development of human resources in order to increase productivity, workplace satisfaction or promotion to a higher position. Also the same important is the provision of financial resources for employee participation in training programs corresponding to the needs and interests of each of them.

Based on these considerations, we can formulate a set of recommendations in order to encourage continuous professional

training of employees at the organization level:

- Introducing a transparent system of financing the training programs within organizations and setting a budget for their employee participation. The allocation of such a special budget for training, at which each of the employees can have access, in accordance with the needs of specific deformation, could be a major driver for increasing participation in training.

- Increase investment in human resources, especially since the launch of the new structural programs for supporting training programs can help facilitate such an actions.

- Training programs focused on developing the employees' transversal competences. Developing professional skills stand as a priority in continuous training, but the acquisition social skills and some new basic skills can be prioritized for the evolution of the company and human resources that it has.

- Encouraging participation in training programs for all categories of employees, even those considered risk categories on the labor market, such as low-skilled people, people aged over 45 years.

At the macroeconomic level, encouraging participation in training programs can be achieved through actions of development, implementation and effective coordination of all policies for smart increasing, sustainable and inclusive favourable at national, local level and on fields of activity. In this respect, there are two broad categories of intervention needed:

- ✓ Actions that aid coordination by the institutions responsible for introducing the sustainable measures of professional training in all policies and at every level.

- ✓ The adoption of legislative measures, well-grounded in financial terms, with multiannual implementation, viable in the medium and long term: encouraging lifelong learning for employees; adoption of minimum requirements to identify real

needs of professional training, quantity and quality of professional training; mandating the use of tools for quantitative and qualitative monitoring and evaluating on fields of activity to adjust on the fly the action programs in continuing professional training.

Also on this level is necessary to allocate resources for awareness campaigns, lobbying, valuing learning, sharing its benefits for individuals and organizations, but also the implementation of European methods of work organization (eg. Investors in People) that emphasize the professional training of employees on assessing the needs of employees in terms of professional and personal development and balance

professional activity with family life, on assessing knowledge and skills gained from the training and not least on the clear and conscious positioning of the employee against objectives and short and long-term strategy of the company where they work.

Not least, another aspect to be taken into consideration is to promote the dialogue between companies and training organizations to establish partnerships in order to meet the medium term needs and skills of organizations, but also to put in accordance the offer and the demand for occupational skills required so much on a highly competitive labor market.

## REFERENCES

1. Petrușă Blaga, "Educarea și formarea profesională a resurselor umane în România, în perspectiva dezvoltării durabile", in *Sustenabilitatea dezvoltării resurselor umane. Provocări pentru România – selecție de studii și cercetări*, Tripon Avram, Vasile Valentina (coordonatori) (Târgu-Mureș: Editura Universității Petru Maior, 2011), 93-99.
2. Șerban Iosifescu, *Formarea formatorilor pentru educația adulților: specific metodologic* (2002), 1, <http://iec.psih.uaic.ro/ciea/file/2002/11.pdf> (accessed on 02.07.2015)
3. Luban Florica, "Formarea continuă și managementul cunoașterii", *Revista Economia. Seria Management*, vol. 8, 1 (2005): 98-117. <http://www.management.ase.ro/reveconomia/2005-1/11.pdf>. (Accesat la data de 02.07.2015)
4. *Legea nr. 53/ 2003*, [http://www.mmuncii.ro/pub/imagemanager/images/file/Legislatie/LEGI/LEGE\\_53-2003R.pdf](http://www.mmuncii.ro/pub/imagemanager/images/file/Legislatie/LEGI/LEGE_53-2003R.pdf) (accessed on 06.07.2015)
5. *Analiză socio-economică pentru programarea Fondurilor Europene 2014-2020*, document elaborat de către Comitetul Consultativ Tematic: Ocupare, Incluziune Socială și Servicii Sociale, Grupul de lucru privind Formarea Profesională, [http://www.fseromania.ro/images/doc/analiza\\_socio\\_ec.pdf](http://www.fseromania.ro/images/doc/analiza_socio_ec.pdf). (accessed on 01.07.2015)
6. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, New Edition, (England: Pearson Education Limited, 2009): 1765.
7. Gabriela Dima, Doru Dima, "Trainingul în organizații: moft sau necesitate?", în *Psihologia Resurselor Umane*, vol. 4, 1 (2006): 114.
8. <http://cursuri-calificare.blogspot.ro/2012/06/de-ce-e-necesara-instruirea-angajatilor.html> (accessed on 01.07.2015)
9. Muntean Silvana Nicoleta, *Managementul resurselor umane. Fundament al creșterii performanței organizațiilor naționale și multinaționale*, (Sibiu, Editura Universității "Lucian Blaga", 2015): 118.
10. Mihai Daniela Roxana, *Serviciile de consultanță în management: o abordare din perspectiva marketingului*, (Brașov: Transilvania University Press, 2009): 156.