

Iwona KUBICA
Cracow University of Economics
Faculty of Economics and International Relations
The Chair of Human Capital Management

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF THE ADAPTATION PROCESS IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Summary. Knowledge of the employees is a valuable resource organizations want to use in all areas of their operations. Thus, they invest in developing, motivating and retaining their employees. To achieve the above, it is necessary to possess and introduce a new worker to the material and social work environment. This process gains a particular importance in the case of international organizations, where it is necessary to assimilate people from different cultural circles.

The article presents an attempt to identify the impact of social and cultural factors on the course of the adaptation process. It presents also tools and methods that may be used by the organizations in this process. The whole has been completed with the conclusions of a survey concerning the execution of the adaptation process in international organizations.

Keywords: adaptation process, acculturation, organizational culture, national culture, international organization, expatriate

SPOŁECZNO-KULTUROWE UWARUNKOWANIA PROCESU ADAPTACJI W ORGANIZACJACH MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH

Streszczenie. Wiedza posiadana przez pracowników jest cennym zasobem, który organizacje pragną wykorzystywać we wszystkich obszarach swojej działalności. Inwestują zatem w celu rozwijania, motywowania i zatrzymywania pracowników. Aby do tego doszło, konieczne jest wcześniejsze pozyskanie i wdrożenie nowego pracownika do materialnego i społecznego środowiska pracy. Proces ten nabiera szczególnego znaczenia w przypadku organizacji międzynarodowych, gdzie konieczne jest zasymilowanie osób, wywodzących się z różnych kręgów kulturowych.

W artykule podjęto próbę zidentyfikowania wpływu czynników społeczno-kulturowych na przebieg procesu adaptacji. Zaprezentowano także narzędzia

i metody, które organizacje mogą zastosować w tym procesie. Całość uzupełniono wnioskami z badań na temat realizacji procesu adaptacji w organizacjach międzynarodowych.

Słowa kluczowe: proces adaptacji, akulturacja, kultura organizacyjna, kultura narodowa, organizacja międzynarodowa, expatriant

1. Introduction

Globalization, achieving profitability through growth, use of possibilities created by technologies, generation of intellectual capital as a source of competitive advantage or, finally, the need for operating under the conditions of continuous changes are some of the most important challenges to be faced by contemporary organizations¹. In order to meet them, the organizations use organizational factors, such as speed of action, flexibility, ability to learn fast or, finally, having highly competent employees². An increasing meaning of human capital in the organization, as a key determinant of competitiveness, requires a prior prediction concerning the number and the type of workers who will be necessary for the organization. The issues of employing workers are well described in the national and foreign subject literature. The issue of the process crowning the recruitment process, i.e. introduction to work or – in other words – adaptation of a newly employed worker, is slightly different. It is an extremely complex process, occurring with different intensity in each company hiring new workers. So that a newly employed worker could become a full-value employee, he or she must adapt to the organization as such, to his or her new role and to responsibilities requested from him or her. In addition, he or she must familiarize with material work conditions and assimilate with co-workers, superiors and/or subordinates who often come from far different cultural circles. Hence, the adaptation process can be located at the contact of economic, sociological, cultural (anthropogenic) and psychological issues. The deliberations included in this article are dedicated to the latter aspects.

¹ Ulrich D.: Human Resource Champions. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Mass. 1996, p. 126-127.

² Poczowski A.: Zarządzanie Zasobami Ludzkimi. Strategie – procesy – metody. PWE, Warszawa 2008, s. 37.

2. Impact of social and cultural factors on the adaptation process

The notion of culture has been used by anthropologists for a long time. And though there are more than one hundred definitions³, their vast majority agree that culture is "a set of elements, being the basis for standards of the processes of perception, assessment, communication, forming beliefs and behavior common in the group of people connected by the same language, geographical location and historical time"⁴. From the above it results that culture:

- is assigned to one group of people and to no other
- affects behavior of group members in a uniform and predictable manner
- is inherited from generation to generation (thus it is not inborn, but learned)
- it includes the system of values⁵.

Therefore, we can assume, like Mead and Andrews (2011), that cultural values affect behavior of representatives of a given national community, therefore – in the process of work, their reactions to particular events and decisions made by the management of the organization will be similar. It means that the management in culturally diverse organizations must be prepared for different reactions of employees from various cultural circles and adapt their actions to a given context⁶.

2.1. Impact of national culture on organizational culture

Cultures of a given organization cannot be understood and examined separately from culture of a country (or countries) where the organization runs their operations, from culture of the mother country, as well as from national cultures of the employed workers (multicultural groups). The subject literature presents different concepts of cultural models. It is worth mentioning that the issues of culture (both national and organizational) still raise many disputes and controversies, which results, to a large extent, from ambiguities of the notion, various expectations of researchers or finally, "the key" to explaining phenomena that are difficult to explain⁷. The authors of the most popular and the most widely used concepts

³ See, inter alia, Kałaska M.: *Poznawczy wymiar różnic kulturowych w spostrzeganiu społecznym*, [w:] Kossowska M., Śmieja M., Śpiewak S. (red.): *Społeczne ścieżki poznania*. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2005; Wellin M.: *Managing the Personnel Contract Using the Personnel Deal to Increase Business Performance*. a Wolters Kluwer business, Warsaw 2010; Mead R., Andrews T.G.: *Zarządzanie międzynarodowe*. a Wolters Kluwer business, Warszawa 2011; Kus B.R., Moczydłowska J.M.: *Zachowania organizacyjne*. Difin, Warszawa 2009; Boski P.: *Kulturowe ramy zachowań społecznych*. Podręcznik psychologii międzykulturowej. PWN, Warszawa 2010.

⁴ Triandis H.C.: *The psychological measurement of cultural syndromes*. „*American Psychologist*”, No. 51, 1996.

⁵ Mead R., Andrews T.G., op.cit., p.27, 121.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 38.

⁷ Poczowski A.: op.cit., p. 65-66.

are E. Schein, G. Hofstede, E.T. Hall or R. Trompenaars and Ch. Hampden-Turner⁸. A common feature of all the above mentioned concepts is that some signs of culture are easily observable and realized whereas the other are deeply embedded and operate in the sphere of human sub-consciousness⁹. It is nothing else but they that form the base of human behaviors and are identified by researchers as a source of cultural differences. Most models are descriptive (comparative), where – as opposed to the normative models, one culture is assessed in respect of the other, permitting comparison of behaviors of one cultural group with behaviors of the other group¹⁰. An example of such model is the concept of 5 cultural dimensions by G. Hofstede, which is presented in the table below.

Table 1

Characteristics of national culture dimensions according to G. Hofstede

Dimension		Differentiating factor	Characteristics
Distance towards authority	large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dealing with social inequalities and their impact on professional life, - expectations towards superiors concerning principles and the manner of operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acceptance of the hierarchical order, - decisions of management taken automatically and paternalistically, - less influential people feel dependent on more influential ones, - employee is more willing to cooperate with the superior than his or her co-workers
	small		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - managers perceive themselves as practical and systematic, open; they consult subordinates when making decisions, - employees are reluctant to strict supervision, prefer active participation of superiors in works of a given group, - desire to work in groups, great attachment to interdependencies
Avoiding uncertainty	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accepting uncertainty - tolerance of ambiguous situations, - attitude towards changes, - frequency of stress, - work planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appreciated long-term stabilization (exact division of responsibilities, clearly determined career path, retirement plans), - fear against the effects of conflicts, aversion to competition, - desirable managers with professional knowledge, rather than searching for easy solutions, - small subordinates' ability to take own initiatives
	low		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lower level of fear and professional stress, - smaller resistance to changes, greater will to undertake risk, - small loyalty towards the superior, - competition accepted as healthy and desired, - relatively low age average of management

⁸ A detailed description of the above mentioned concept can be found in: Hofstede G., Hofstede G.J.: *Kultury i organizacje*. PWE, Warszawa 2007; Trompenaars F., Hampden-Turner Ch.: *Zarządzanie personelem w organizacjach zróżnicowanych kulturowo*. Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków 2005 oraz Mead R., Andrews T.G., op.cit.

⁹ Rozkwitalska M.: *Bariery w zarządzaniu międzykulturowym. Perspektywa filii zagranicznych korporacji transnarodowych*. a Wolters Kluwer business, Warszawa 2011, s. 60.

¹⁰ Mead R., Andrews T.G.: op.cit., p. 48-49.

cont. tab. 1

Individualism vs. collectivism	individualism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - degree of subordination of the individual in the group, - making the individual dependant on own resources, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - separation of identity (worker works for himself or herself to satisfy own needs), - respect for individual accomplishments, rights, decisions and opinions, - revolt against conformism, - willingness to accept challenges, pursuit of a large degree of self-reliance, - pursuit of having free time for private life, - loyalty (towards the organization) is the object of calculation of the individual
	collectivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - perception of the individual and his or her rights in the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advantage of the interest of the group over the interest of the individual , - building identity based on a group to which one belongs, - loyalty is more important than efficiency, - good work conditions and the possibility of improving qualifications are appreciated, - acceptable competition between different groups
Masculinity vs. femininity	masculinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - meaning of the social role, - approach to earnings, recognition, relations at the workplace, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong diverse roles of both sexes, - professional achievements are the highest social goal, - work is more important than private life, - focus on high earnings, possibility of undertaking many challenges (mainly individual)
	femininity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> place of residence and nature of employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - weaker separation of roles based on sex, - the organization should interfere in private life, - greater importance attained to cooperation, rather than competition, interpersonal contacts count more than obtaining power or enriching
Time perspective ("Confucian dynamism")	short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extent to which the group invests in future, - care for the truth vs. seeking virtues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respect for tradition, fulfillment of social obligations, saving face, - focusing on dates, - remuneration consistent with skills (meritocracy), - personnel management and employees form two mentally separate groups
	long-term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development of features bringing benefits in the future (stubbornness, economy), - managerial personnel and employees have the same goals, - lack of approval for large social and economic differences, - investing in permanent and long-term networks of personal relations

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of: Hofstede G.: op.cit; Kuc B.R., Moczyłowska J.M.: op.cit; Mead R., Andrews T.G.: op.cit.

In spite of some constraints¹¹, the presented model gives the employees of international organizations (mainly managerial staff) many cognitive possibilities. In practice, the majority of members of the society approve common culture and show, in routine situations,

¹¹ The concept by G. Hofstede is often criticized owing to: (1) artificial narrowing of the definition of cultural group (community of the national state), (2) attachment of the same importance to specific dimensions in all cultures, (3) selection of research sample (one sector, one international corporation), (4) bias and honesty of the surveyed (e.g. group filling in the surveys). More in: Mead R., Andrews T.G.: op.cit, p. 68-69, 81-86.

behavioral patterns characterized in particular cultural dimensions, even if to a person "from the outside" they can seem odd (the so-called cultural relativism). Translating these deliberations to the organizational issues it can be assumed, like A. Pocztowski, that *organizational culture is an established pattern of assumptions, standards and methods of coping with experiences shared by members of a given group, which have been developed, discovered or created in the course of its development and which manifest themselves in specified behaviors of its members*¹². Hence, the organizational culture is:

- holistic (includes and creates certain whole, being something more than only a simple sum of its constituents)
- determined historically (reflects the history of the organizational development)
- linked to the subjects of the anthropological research (analysis of rituals, organizational symbols)
- social creation (it is created and maintained by a group of people forming an organization)
- the so-called "soft" element in the organization
- relatively difficult to change¹³.

Therefore, we can assume, like E. Schein, that the organizational culture is developed in the process of adaptation of the organization to the environment in which it operates, as well as in the process of internal integration, including forming a system of communication between the members of the organization, determining criteria of creating groups and teams, exercising power or, finally, affecting behaviors of specific members of the organization¹⁴. According to experts in the subject¹⁵, the presented dimensions of organizational culture are of particular importance under the conditions of globalization of economy and opening labor market, resulting in increased percentage of foreigners in the structure of employment of many organizations. Not only do they bring to the organization own experience and personal culture but, first of all, culture of their country¹⁶. Hence, it can be seen that when discussing the organizational culture it is impossible to "escape" from the aspects of national culture. Thus, it is a mistake when organizations (usually through their managers) try to impose on representatives of a different culture "their" cultural standards. This procedure usually encounters large resistance and creates many difficulties to the company. It is difficult to

¹² Pocztowski A.: op.cit, p. 66.

¹³ Hofstede G.: op.cit, p. 297.

¹⁴ Hellriegel D., Slocum J.W. Jr., Woodman R.W.: Organizational Behavior, [in:] Pocztowski A.: op.cit, p. 67.

¹⁵ See Janowska Z.: Wybrane problemy zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi. Pozyskiwanie, adaptacja i zwalnianie pracowników. Absolwent, Łódź 2001 and Laroche L., Rutherford D.: Recruiting, Retaining and Promoting Culturally Different Employees. Elsevier, Oxford 2007.

¹⁶ Żarczyńska-Dobiesz A.: Adaptacja nowego pracownika do pracy w przedsiębiorstwie. a Wolters Kluwer business, Kraków 2008, s. 112-113.

persuade other people to perceive reality through the prism of culture not being their own. Therefore, is it a large impediment in any adaptation processes, and development of intercultural skills among employees and making them aware of these differences, as well as teaching respect for them become one of the main challenges in intercultural organizations¹⁷.

2.2. Impact of organizational culture on the development of the adaptation process

The organizational culture is one of main determinants forming the process of adaptation of newly employed workers and it gains in importance as early as at the time of recruiting (see Fig. 1). Then, one of the parties (prospective employee) accepts the proposed position (along with the scope of obligations) and future work conditions. On the other hand, the other party (the employer) agrees to employ on a specific position a person representing an appropriate level of competences and experience¹⁸. The purpose of recruiting should be, thus, not only selection of candidates meeting necessary formal (job) requirements, but also undertaking an attempt to consolidate new employees with the existing organizational culture¹⁹.

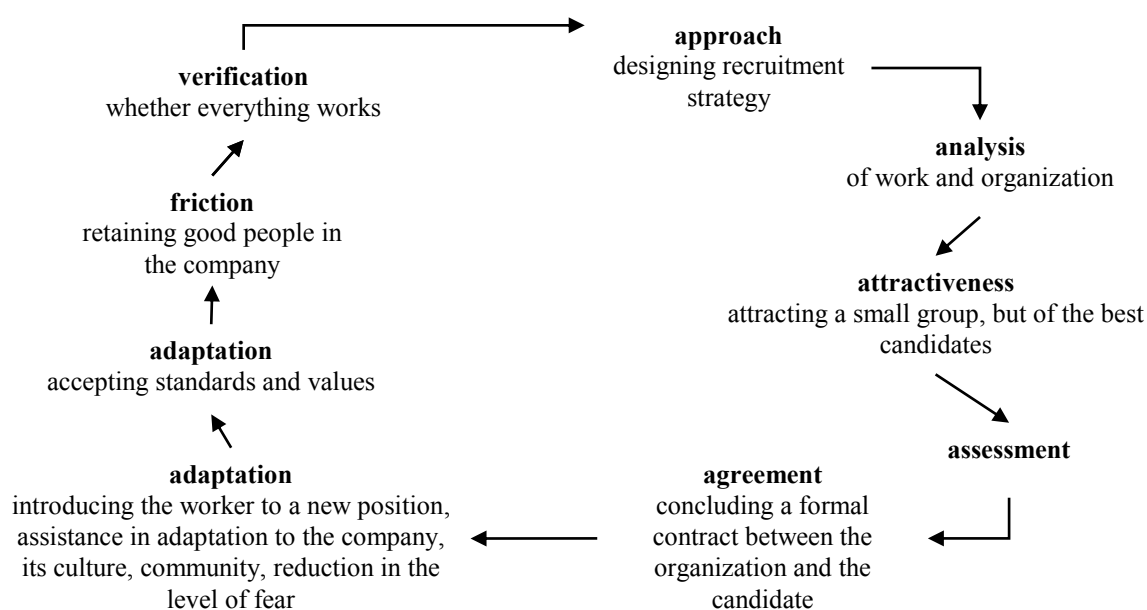


Fig. 1. Recruitment cycle

Rys. 1. Cykl rekrutacyjny

Source: Kossowska M.: Ocena i rozwój umiejętności pracowniczych. Wydawnictwo Akademickie, Kraków 2001, s. 19.

¹⁷ Mead R., Andrews T.G.: op.cit, p. 93.

¹⁸ Żarczyńska-Dobiesz A.: op.cit, s. 40-41.

¹⁹ Ibidem, s. 103.

Exchange on the terms of reciprocity, negotiability and voluntary participation are basic assumptions of the psychological contract (personal contract)²⁰. Since psychological contracts show the way in which people interpret promises and statements, either party of the same employment relation may have different views concerning specific terms. What is important – due to the lack of possibilities of verbalizing expectations related to emotions, satisfaction or other strictly psychical and social characteristics of the individual, it is impossible to formalize fully the psychological contract²¹. Thus, the psychological contract is based on discretionary behaviors and attribution, enabling impact by impression²².

Creating a specific "impression" about the organization (and thus accommodating organizational culture) starts as early as at the time when the organization – the prospective employer, starts to function in the awareness of the future employee through information coming from the mass media, opinions of other people (friends, co-workers, etc.) or reputation functioning in the environment. All these elements will exert impact on ideas and expectations of the prospective employees with regard to the personal contract with the future employer. During consecutive stages of recruitment, the job candidate learns more and more about the company, in which he or she will work. An invaluable source of knowledge about the organization itself, working methods binding in it or the way of treating people (rewarding, possibility of promotion, etc.) are various kinds of conversations with recruitment specialists, junior level managers and accidental interactions with other employees. Apart from with "hard" material information, the prospective employees receive numerous subtle non-verbal messages, concerning the personal contract with the prospective potential employer. They may include, among others, manner of answering calls, waiting time for answer to the application, interpersonal skills of recruiters or, finally, adequacy of the selection method to the job being applied for. As a result, the candidate can imagine what it means to work for this specific organization and foresee what personal contracts he or she may expect. At that time, the prospective employer forms an opinion on the candidate, his or her role and suitability for the organization²³ (see Fig. 2).

²⁰ Miś A.: Rola kontraktu psychologicznego, [w:] Pocztoński A. (red.): Procesy płynności i retencji zatrudnienia w organizacji. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, Kraków 2009, s. 103.

²¹ Ibidem, s. 104.

²² Ibidem.

²³ Wellin M.: op.cit, p. 74-75.

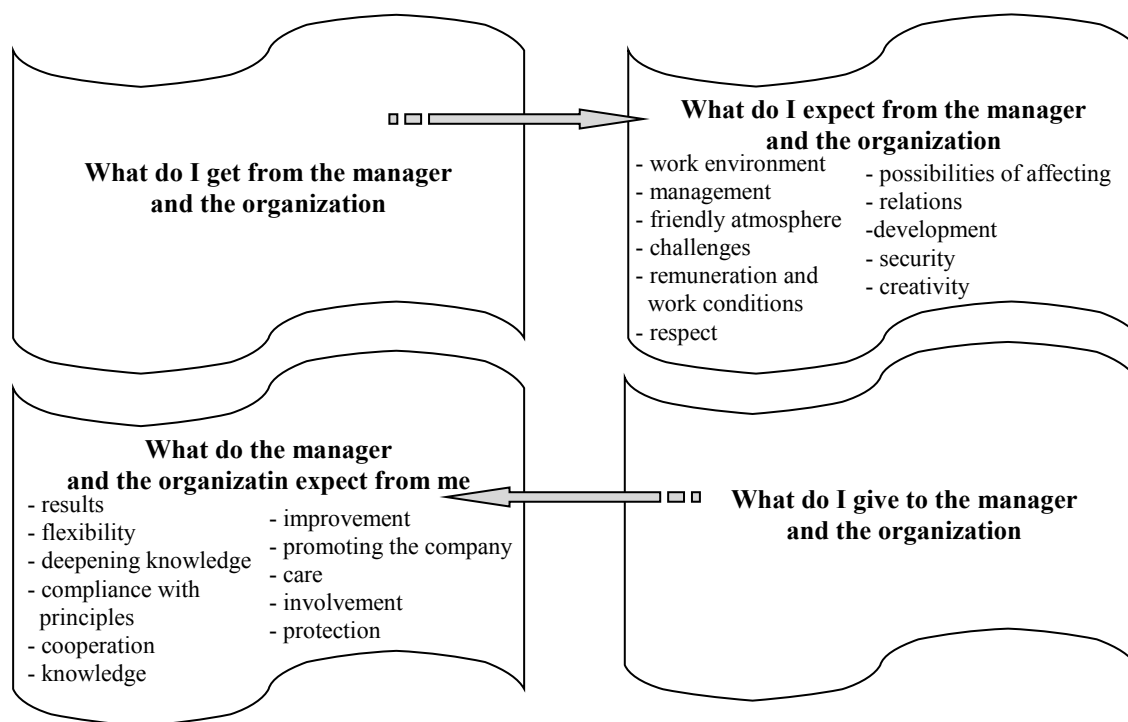


Fig. 2. Components of the personal contract at the workplace

Rys. 2. Składniki umowy osobistej w miejscu pracy

Source: Wellin M.: op.cit., p. 69.

2.3. Employee adaptation model

It is considered that the process of adaptation of new employees is one of the most important processes which may be influenced by the organization²⁴ at one of two levels:

1. **professional level**, namely implementation to the content of the work and to the material work environment; the newly-employed worker should accept his or her new professional role, master the scope of tasks to be performed, as well as – under technical adjustment, master operation of the entrusted machines and devices²⁵.
2. **social level**, namely adjustment to the superior, co-workers and clients, as well as adaptation to standards, habits or informal behaviors binding in the community of a given organization; in the case of culturally diverse organizations, it is also necessary to learn about the dominant ethos and values professed by most personnel (acculturation)²⁶.

²⁴ Cascio W.: *Managing Human Resources*. McGraw-Hill, New York 1991.

²⁵ Kubica I.: *Adaptacja społeczno-zawodowa nowo przyjętych pracowników*. Zeszyty Naukowe, nr 828. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, Kraków 2010, s. 41.

²⁶ Ibidem; Wellin M.: op.cit, p. 77; Poczowski A.: op.cit, p. 152.

The complexity and the multidimensionality of this process require its expression in some time frameworks that, as a model, should include 5 time phases²⁷:

- formal acceptance of a new worker to work (among others, collection of personnel file, transfer to the employee of necessary documents, such as work regulations, the Company's Labor Agreement, remuneration regulations, etc.)²⁸
- introduction to the position (1st working day; presentation of a newly employed to his or her collaborators, transfer of basic information on the organization and tasks being executed on the position)²⁹
- on-the-job briefing (first weeks of the work; includes detailed information on tasks of the employee and operation of machines and devices, as well as transfer of information on customs prevailing in the employee team, expectations towards work standards or expected behavior from the employee)³⁰
- assessment of results (after 3-6 months; determination of the degree of adaptation and "usability" of a newly employed for the organization, discussed e.g. during developmental discussions)³¹
- making a decision on extension or non-extension of the contract of employment³².

From the point of view of the organization, it is recommended that this process should proceed efficiently and take relatively short time. On the other hand, the newly employed worker wants to make the best possible impression on the organization and achieve full efficiency as soon as possible³³ through their knowledge, experience and personality (habits, enthusiasm and willingness to work), as well as own needs and objectives he or she wants to achieve on the new position. However, in the clash with organizational "reality", discrepancies disclose between expectations and ideas of the employee on the organization (and his or her role in it) and what the company actually offers to the newly employed worker. This discord (cognitive gap) may apply to both the physical work environment, delegated tasks and obligations, but also to co-workers with whom the individual interacts³⁴ – in a word, each of the elements of the above mentioned psychological contract. Intensity of this discord is often determined by cultural (national) determinants, which affect behaviors of representatives of a given national community³⁵. Therefore, the organization should make best efforts so that this discord, if any, would be possibly small and least cost-consuming.

²⁷ Poczowski A.: *op.cit.*, p. 153.

²⁸ *Ibidem.*

²⁹ *Ibidem.*

³⁰ Armstrong M.: *Human Resource Management*. Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Cracow 2005, p. 417.

³¹ Kubica I.: *op.cit.*, s.43.

³² Golnau W.: *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi*. Cedewu, Warszawa 2004, s.190.

³³ Laroche L., Rutherford D.: *op.cit.*, p. 77.

³⁴ *Ibidem.*, p. 41.

³⁵ Mead R., Andrews T.G.: *op.cit.*, p. 24.

A full recruitment process, crowned with an organized adaptation process, is a significant cost for the organization and increases even more in international companies³⁶, where – apart from local employees, the share of expatriates and immigrants in employment is increasingly greater³⁷. Companies that knowingly want to use differences existing among their staff should make every effort so that the organizational system, organizational policy and practice would not bring greater benefits to one group at the expense of the other. Thus, the work environment should reflect social environment in which the organization operates or for which it operates, and newly employed workers should have ensured full participation in the functioning of the organization³⁸. For this purpose, organizations may initiate various adaptive actions, creating their "packages" adapted to the possibilities and needs of both companies and employees (see tab. 2).

Table 2

Possible adaptive actions

Action	Characteristics
Functioning of the organization (Organization orientation)	Familiarizing a newly employed worker with the principles of functioning of the organization, including: main directions of operations of the company, its policy; location of important offices/equipment/rooms, useful in daily work; meeting with the superior and co-workers; familiarizing with OHS regulations; discussing programs supporting employees; indicating contact people for problematic issues
Professional adaptation (Job orientation)	Introduction to the position by familiarizing with a description of the position, criteria of assessing work results, indication of the reporting method, the expected interactions with other employees/clients/suppliers, familiarizing with the system of motivation, training and development. Special pressure is put on on-the-job trainings
Social adaptation (Business culture orientation)	Familiarizing new employees with standards/values and expected behaviors. Often used form covers trainings on history, geography, etc. of a given place, logistic support (emergency numbers, banks, transport, important institutions, etc.), trainings on cultural sensitivity (cultural relativism) and intercultural trainings, in which spouses should be included
Educational consulting	Assistance/consulting in education of children and/or partner
Group integration support (Work group orientation)	Making the current employees sensitive to the presence of new people, from other cultural circles, and assistance in learning about them and their cultures

³⁶ Laroche L., Rutherford D.: op.cit., p. 84.

³⁷ For the purpose of this paper, expatriate means an employee (mainly manager or specialist) delegated by an international company abroad for a definite period of time in order to execute tasks in business entities controlled by the company.

³⁸ Pyka A., Kupperts G.: Innovation Networks Theory and Practice, 2007 [quot.:] Mrówczyński P.: Zarządzanie różnorodnością wynikiem zmian w zarządzaniu zasobami ludzkim, [w:] Listwan T., Stor M. (red.): Sukces w zarządzaniu kadrami. Elastyczność w zarządzaniu kapitałem ludzkim. Cz. 1. Problemy zarządczo-ekonomiczne. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, Wrocław 2012, p. 385.

cont. tab. 2

Other actions – coaching, mentoring, "sponsor"	Covering a newly employed worker with support of the coach, mentor or "sponsor" (often from the same cultural circle), which is to provide greater comfort of work, give answers to questions and increase work efficiency,
Social relations (Affinity networks)	Programs/networks associating people from the same cultural circles in order to share experiences, successes, challenges and the acquired knowledge (mostly in the cultural aspect), as well as to inspire to further professional development

Source: Kubica I.: Proces adaptacji pracowników w organizacjach zróżnicowanych kulturowo, [w:] Witkowski S.A., Stor M. (red.): Sukces w zarządzaniu kadrami. Elastyczność w zarządzaniu Kapitałem Ludzkim. Cz. 2. Problemy zarządczo-psychologiczne. Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Wrocław 2012, s.297.

3. Adaptive support of actions of different groups of employee in international organizations – conclusions from the survey

However, when analyzing the empirical results of empirical research with regard to adaptation, it is possible to have an impression that many companies do not attain sufficient attention to the issues of introducing employees to the organization. And though there are many available tools in this respect, only a few of them are applied. From the survey conducted by A. Żarczyńska-Dobiesz³⁹ it can be concluded that in organizations the responsibility for this process is transferred to HR department (80.1%), however, in practice, there are no clearly designated entities responsible for this process (22.5% of answers). From the point of view of newly employed workers (86.2%), the process of adaptation assumes informal form and they obtain the most important information on the company and cooperation by telephone, e-mail and formal letters (67.5%, 54.8% and 52.1%, respectively). What may worry – personal contacts were only 47.3% of the selected answers of the workers and were far discrepant from the answers of the companies that, in almost 90% of cases, declared that the process of adaptation proceeded by means of personal contacts. With regard to the aspect of training newly employed staff, it usually assumes a form of standard OHS trainings, on-the-job briefing and familiarizing with the work regulations (ca. 60-80% of the selected answers), for which the superior and collaborators are responsible. On the other hand, statements on using advanced specialist trainings for new workers were rare (17.9%). With regard to the source of knowledge about the organizational culture and the course of acculturation, it takes place mostly under meetings and integration trips⁴⁰. Thus, it may be concluded that in most companies a newly employed worker is still "thrown in at the deep end" and specialized adaptive programs are, unfortunately, a rarity (ca. 13% of the selected answers), which is explained by the lack of funds or time for creation and execution of such programs.

³⁹ Żarczyńska-Dobiesz A.: op.cit., p. 209, 216-218.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 225 -227.

The companies sending their employees to foreign missions have a different outlook on the adaptation process (in particular, on the acculturation process)⁴¹. As it results from the survey of the Chair of Human Capital Management of the Cracow University of Economics⁴², expatriates are a particularly privileged group and organizations invest much more funds and time in the processes of their adaptation, than in the case of other newly employed persons. The respondents, when asked about preparation and adaptation of employees going to foreign missions, answered that assistance in "arranging life" and current problems were the most often undertaken actions (41.86% of the selected answers among branches and 42.11% among headquarters). In each next aspect, quite significant differences were noticeable between practices of the Polish headquarters and branches of international organizations, operating on the Polish market. Branches of international companies were focused mainly on language training (41.86%), tax consultancy, ensuring to the expatriate learning language of the host country and permanent contact with the company in the mother country (39.53% of the selected answers), as well as introducing the family to the local community, and coaching and consulting/psychological assistance (37.21% of the selected answers). On the other hand, headquarters were focusing on ensuring to the expatriate and his or her family "a supervisor" and - like branches, maintaining permanent contact with the company in the mother country (36.84% of the selected answers). The activities taken most rarely in the case of branches covered assistance in the issues of children's education (20.93%), as well as conducting trainings related to the specific character of the host country and assistance in finding apartment (23,26% of the selected answers respectively), as well as trainings on cultural and social competences (25.58%). Assistance with regard to accommodation (12.28%), provision of information on living conditions, etc. in the host country (15.79%), as well as trainings associated with the specific character of work conditions in the host country (21.05%) were, on the other hand, activities offered by Polish companies operating on international markets to expatriates with the lowest frequency. What is worth attention, even the most popular actions were taken by less than half of the surveyed respondents, which suggests that the surveyed organizations dedicate in their operations much less attention to the expatriate after beginning of the stay abroad than in the phase of preparation, when the most popular solutions were applied by as much as 67% of the companies.

⁴¹ The notion of foreign missio can be understood as delegating an employee (regardless of the position) to the headquarters or entity managed by it, beyond the parent country of an employee, for a determined period time and in order to execute any entrusted tasks.

⁴² The survey carried out in 2011 covered 43 branche of international companies and 57 Polish organizations operating on international markets; More in: Pochtowski A. (red.): Zarządzanie misjami zagranicznymi. Organizacyjne i indywidualne aspekty pracy ekspatrianta. a Wolters Kluwer business, Kraków 2012.

In the light of the aforementioned survey results, it seems reasonably practical to postulate that the adaptation process (mainly of cultural adaptation) should not relate only to expatriates alone. Organizations should take also account of local employees for whom acceptance of a foreigner is also a challenge. Thus, many authors dealing with the issues of cultural diversity postulate a view on the organization's need to take a number of actions, supporting integration and retention of all hired staff⁴³.

4. Conclusion

Almost each organization stresses that its most important resource are its employees. Thus, it may surprise that the area of adaptation of new employees is still neglected, and management does not see association between the implementation process and frequent quitting job by new employees in the first months of work. The organizations should take into consideration their character, organizational culture and the executed personnel strategy and, on this basis, decide when and which activities will they use, as well as whom (expatriates alone, expatriates and persons accompanying them, multicultural teams or finally all employees) will they cover by the adaptation process. In practice, full-scale one-time adaptive-integration programs and short (but cyclical) actions, including each time a greater number of employees, may prove equally effective⁴⁴. Hence, the most important from the point of view of the HR process is that development of specialized adaptation programs should be followed by active implementation. Only with full assimilation of a newly employed worker he or she will be able to use quickly and effectively his or her potential.

Bibliography

1. Armstrong M.: Human Resource Management. Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Cracow 2005.
2. Boski P.: Kulturowe ramy zachowań społecznych. Podręcznik psychologii międzykulturowej. PWN, Warszawa 2010.
3. Cascio W.: Managing Human Resources. McGraw-Hill, New York 1991.
4. Golnau W.: Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi. Cedewu, Warszawa 2004.
5. Hellriegel D., Slocum J.W. Jr., Woodman R.W.: Organizational Behavior. West Publishing Company, Minneapolis-St.Paul 1995.

⁴³ Laroche L., Rutherford D.: op.cit, p.98.

⁴⁴ Kubica I.: Proces adaptacji pracowników delegowanych na misje zagraniczne, [w:] Poczowski A. (red.): Zarządzanie misjami..., op.cit, s. 116-123.

6. Hofstede G., Hofstede G.J.: Kultury i organizacje. PWE, Warszawa 2007.
7. Janowska Z.: Wybrane problemy zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi. Pozyskiwanie, adaptacja i zwalnianie pracowników. Absolwent, Łódź 2001.
8. Kałaska M.: Poznawczy wymiar różnic kulturowych w spostrzeganiu społecznym, [w:] Kossowska M., Śmieja M., Śpiewak S. (red.): Społeczne ścieżki poznania. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2005.
9. Kossowska M.: Ocena i rozwój umiejętności pracowniczych. Wydawnictwo Akademickie, Kraków 2001.
10. Kubica I.: Adaptacja społeczno-zawodowa nowo przyjętych pracowników. Zeszyty Naukowe, nr 828. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, Kraków 2010.
11. Kubica I.: Proces adaptacji pracowników delegowanych na misje zagraniczne, [w:] Pochtowski A. (red.): Zarządzanie misjami zagranicznymi. Organizacyjne i indywidualne aspekty pracy ekspatrianta. a Wolters Kluwer business, Kraków 2012.
12. Kubica I.: Proces adaptacji pracowników w organizacjach zróżnicowanych kulturowo, [w:] Witkowski S.A., Stor M. (red.): Sukces w zarządzaniu kadrami. Elastyczność w zarządzaniu Kapitałem Ludzkim. Cz. 2. Problemy zarządczo-psychologiczne. Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Wrocław 2012.
13. Kus B.R., Moczyłowska J.M.: Zachowania organizacyjne. Difin, Warszawa 2009.
14. Laroche L., Rutherford D.: Recruiting, Retaining and Promoting Culturally Different Employees. Elsevier, Oxford 2007.
15. Mead R., Andrews T.G.: Zarządzanie międzynarodowe. a Wolters Kluwer business, Warszawa 2011.
16. Miś A.: Rola kontraktu psychologicznego, [w:] Pochtowski A. (red.): Procesy płynności i retencji zatrudnienia w organizacji. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, Kraków 2009.
17. Mrówczyński P.: Zarządzanie różnorodnością wynikiem zmian w zarządzaniu zasobami ludzkimi, [w:] Listwan T., Stor M. (red.): Sukces w zarządzaniu kadrami. Elastyczność w zarządzaniu kapitałem ludzkim. Cz. 1. Problemy zarządczo-ekonomiczne. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, Wrocław 2012.
18. Pochtowski A. (red.): Zarządzanie misjami zagranicznymi. Organizacyjne i indywidualne aspekty pracy ekspatrianta. a Wolters Kluwer business, Kraków 2012.
19. Pochtowski A.: Zarządzanie Zasobami Ludzkimi. Strategie – procesy – metody. PWE, Warszawa 2008.
20. Pyka A., Koppers G.: Innovation Networks Theory and Practice. Edward Elgar, P.H. Cheltenham, London 2007.
21. Rozkwitalska M.: Bariery w zarządzaniu międzykulturowym. Perspektywa filii zagranicznych korporacji transnarodowych. a Wolters Kluwer business, Warszawa 2011.

22. Triandis H.C.: The psychological measurement of cultural syndromes. „American Psychologist”, No. 51, 1996.
23. Trompenaars F., Hampden-Turner Ch.: Zarządzanie personelem w organizacjach zróżnicowanych kulturowo. Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków 2005.
24. Ulrich D.: Human Resource Champions. Harvard Business School Press, Boston 1996.
25. Wellin M.: Managing the Personnel Contract Using the Personnel Deal to Increase Business Performance. a Wolters Kluwer business, Warsaw 2010.
26. Żarczyńska-Dobiesz A.: Adaptacja nowego pracownika do pracy w przedsiębiorstwie. a Wolters Kluwer business, Kraków 2008.