

Current and predicted changes in the external environment related to
Elizabeth School of London Agency



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10.04.2020

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1.0 Introduction

There are a lot of factors that make a business run successfully, like detailed planning, networking, customer service, etc, but one which is very significant for a business is Human Resources Management. According to Armstrong (2014), Human Resources Management represents an exhaustive and coherent approach concerning the labor market and the development of human capabilities. Gubman (1996) defines human resource management as the mission to acquire, develop, and retain talent; thus align the workforce with the business, and contribute to business success. Those three people resourcing challenges will never change according to Stephen (2005).

Human Resource Management is an Art of managing people, making them work for a company, as best as they can, keeping them motivated, trained and satisfied.

In a prospering enterprise, the role of the Human Resources Manager is very important. The manager needs to be able to anticipate changes in the internal and external environment, to recognize them, to be always prepared for any challenges that can have an impact on the company, especially in the modern economy, in the digital area.

According to Popescu & Ratiu (2012), the management of human resources within organizations has started to play an increasingly important role, because of their capabilities, talent and knowledge depend on the success of the company. Employees are the driving force that makes a company to be competitive and valuable and to provide quality services to its clients.

1.2 Background

Elizabeth School of London (ESL) is a recruiting company-dealing with students wishing to study at the university level in the United Kingdom with the intent to obtain an academic degree. In other words, Elizabeth School of London serves as a connection between Universities and people who wish to start or to continue their studies.

The agency was founded in 2011, as an English language school. Because of its success by 2014, it was established as a student recruiting agency, providing educational support services. Elisabeth School of London currently has 3 offices in the United Kingdom, London, Birmingham, Manchester and one office in India. Also, ESL collaborates with more than 55 universities from the United Kingdom.

2.0 Current and predicted changes in the external environment

According to ONS (www.ons.gov.uk/, 2020) the number of women who are working increased rapidly. Between October-December of the 2019 year were employed 15.61 million women, with 298,000 more females than in 2018 and with 1,94 million more than in 2009. This count as 72.4%, compared to 80,6 % of men's employment. The difference is just 8.2 %, which is a big step. However, this number is not necessarily due to the change in policies regarding women's employment; but rather the change in age for State Pension for women.

Global changes like innovations in technology, digitization have brought substantial changes in the labour market. However, the change in HRM became indispensable with time because of the changes in the business environment. According to Kossek (2006), What used to be traditional practices for Human Resources Management, has been subject to various adaptability through the diversity and flexibility of the workforce or the increasing number of women employed in the field of work.

2.1 Technological changes

According to Armstrong (2012), The planning of human resources that resides in the planning of the workforce represents the attainment of the objectives of a business by establishing the number of employees, their quality and their abilities. Society is devolving, the force of technology is expanding, and with it, changes are occurring on the labour market. For this reason, HRM must pay particular attention to workforce planning and to hire the right people who possess the proper skills to cope with changes in the technological environment, according to Brooks (2010).

In terms of work flexibility, because the work at home has started to grow, HRM has to move to a new level of management. Regarding this, it will be necessary to develop new tools for motivation, retention, building the employee-employee relationship, so that remote work becomes a normality and not an impediment to the company's development. Because of the increasing number of people who work from home, the need for HRM involvement will grow as well. Employees who work remotely may not feel within the company, but isolated. Therefore, communication will depend on new technologies, computers and mobile phones, and social networks will become an indispensable tool. However, HRM is responsible for monitoring the work process and updating policies for their acceptable use, according to Brooks (2010).

On the side of recruitment and selection, the specialists that have the role to recruit will have to adapt the process of transition to the use of new technologies and to do it most successfully and smoothly. Technology will have a considerable impact on the business field, and recruiters must have the skills to reach the level of requirements and employ qualified staff. Brooks (2010).

2.2. Social changes

In recent years, the number of inequalities in Europe has increased. To discover the reasons for this process, it is necessary to research the technological changes, as well as international integration, which has started to increase substantially. But globalization and technological changes are not the only changes that have occurred in the labour market. Similarly, it has been found that labour market policies are in decline, as well as the loss of employees' rights, while social policies have reduced the space for redistribution and social protection. All these actions may have contributed to rising inequalities within each national context according to Nascia & Pianta (2009).

According to Acker (2006), all companies have a certain degree of inequality, which are hidden under the name of practices or actions, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organizations. According to the female FTSE report by Singh & Vinnicombe (2004), if we refer to the executive positions, very few women get to hold these higher positions, both in Europe and in the USA. Gatrell & Swan (2008) found that

it is much harder for women to reach high positions and that their career ascent is blocked, and men, on the other hand, have open doors to new possibilities and their ascent is easier.

3.0 People resourcing strategies at ESL and the environmental changes

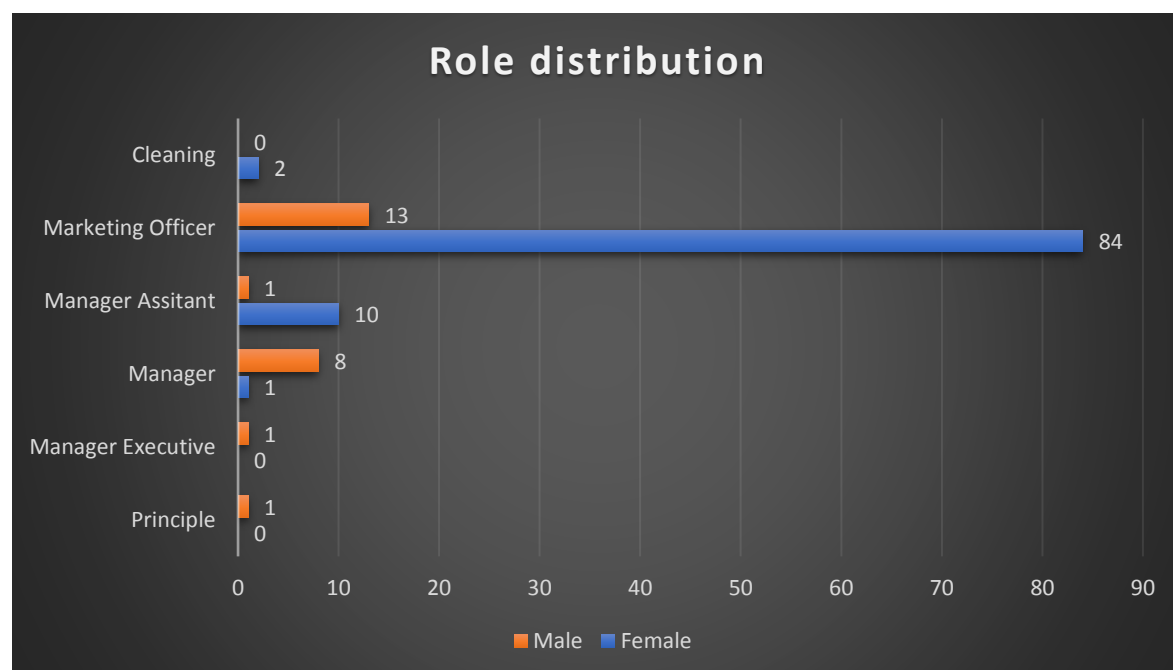
Scarborough & Elias (2002) mentioned that between HR good practice, strategic management and human capital should be a very strong connection. This will conduct to long-term business success.

What differentiates one company from another and makes it competitive, but also record higher results, is the human and intellectual capital it owns. For a company to record long-term results, it is necessary to focus on developing business strategies, and an important factor is the human resources strategy. They must be in correlation and work together, according to Armstrong and Stephens (2005).

3.1 Impact of social changes on Diversity management at ESL

Elizabeth School of London is dominated by women. →Figure 1. below shows the distribution of the roles according to gender at ESL. The company has 120 employees across the 3 offices, with London as the main headquarter where all decisions are made concerning people resourcing strategies, such as how many staff should be recruited at a branch, and minimum staffing levels.

Figure 1. Roles distribution in Elizabeth School of London



Source: Author

As shown in figure 1 above, the gap between males and females is very big and from 99 females, just one has the role of manager. However, most managers are male, an indication of some sort of uncourteous bias or stereotype when it comes to staff appraisal and promotion.

Women are left to occupy the role of assistant manager, with the biggest number of females taking on the role of marketing officers.

Referring to Kruze (2015) unconscious bias is the attitude of people for things, people, which are based on our personal experiences.

to unconscious biases as the implicit positive or negative preferences for things, individuals, or groups shaped through our individual experiences.

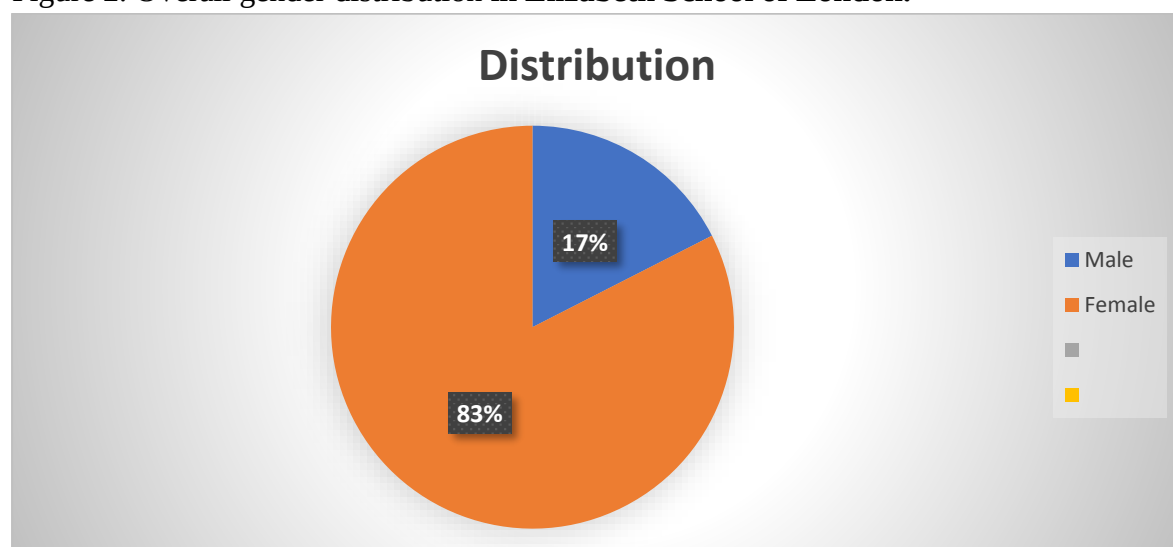
Based on each month's performance, women are recruiting more students than men. The success of the company is not just based on gender, but also on diversity, which has high relevance for Elizabeth School of London.

According to Altham (2016), diversity can be defined as the uniqueness of an individual and the positive way in which we can accept and recognize our differences, concerning gender, race, sexual orientation, age, status, physical abilities, intellectual abilities, religion, belonging, politics, etc.

To become successful, all the branches of a business should work together and in the same direction according to De Chernatony et al., (2009). As it appears in Figure 1, as per Elizabeth School of London management roles, HRM's contribution is very significant regarding diversity management and as it should be used as a generator of ideas, innovative opinions, opportunities. Diversity in the workplace can ensure a favourable climate for development and can be considered as people resourcing strategy.

Elizabeth School of London is not an exception and the number of women increased during the years. Each year, the number of women who started to work for the company increased. At the moment, the company has 120 people, employed on a part-time and fulltime bases. ESL doesn't count gender balance as a priority and in the company are employed, 99 females and 8 males. There may be a diversity issue in ESL according to these figures as shown in figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Overall gender distribution **in Elizabeth School of London.**



Source: Author

3.2 Impact of technological changes on recruitment at ESL.

Technological changes have boosted recruitment at Elizabeth School of London.

On recruitment level, 70% of the recruited women have joined the company through online recruitment. Even the interviews are done online, by video calls. The other 30% are recruited by recommendations. Mostly, all the marketing is done online: advertising on the website, on various social networks and also, by bloggers.

On recruitment of students, is also used online platform, as people contact the marketing officer through social media, chatting applications, e-mails. After that, the marketing officers ask them to send their documents, also online. Once received and verified, interviews are conducted through skype, zoom, other platforms, and people work from anywhere without coming to the office. Once given the job, they sent their IDs and they report daily sales through sending a report with the list of students recruited into the universities daily and that these workers don't have to come to the office but can work remotely. So, the company always has enough people to deliver results. Also, ESL uses technological change to improve the quality of the service which they provide. After being recruited to the University and after their student finance application is done, they are asked, by the company, to provide the feedback on social media or on the agency website.

Technological change is a very useful and important tool for the Elizabeth School of London.

In concrete terms, technological change helps to minimise management issues, the volume of work and it saves a lot of precious time. In addition, it saves money and it increased the customer's/student's satisfaction.

4.0 Conclusion

For a business to be successful, it is important to have motivated, ambitious and talented employees. These employees are a treasure for the company. It is HRM's role to discover these treasures, and once discovered, to be able to keep them in the company and convincing that they are working in the right place.

However, in Elizabeth School of London, HRM should focus on minimising the gap between the number of women and men in the company. They need to revise the way they do advertising for recruitment. At the same time, ESL should take advantage of the experience of people over 40 and bring them into the company. With a mix of different cultural, ethnic and diverse lifestyles, Elizabeth School of London will better cope with the changes in the external environment, but HRM should focus not only on the talent and hard work of employees but also motivating them through training, opportunities, bonuses, increases in functions and salaries.

Besides, because almost all the customers of Elizabeth School of London are people who are used to new technology, the company should launch an application (online App) for study application, sending the documents, communication, etc. This will make the connection between potential customers and the agency, better, easier, more agile and it will reduce a lot of time. Also, the App will attract more customers and at the same time, it will serve as a cheaper and relevant tool for marketing communication.

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