



EUROPEAN CURRICULUM

RECRUITING AND RETAINING STAFF IN SOCIAL SERVICES



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Team of authors

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1. A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING THE LONG-TERM CARE SECTOR

On completion of this unit, participants should gain an in-depth understanding of the importance of effective recruitment and retention of staff in the Long-Term Care (LTC) sector, with an emphasis on its critical role in providing high-quality care and services. In addition, they will develop tailored expertise in staffing foreign workers in their organisations, as well as formalizing/recruiting informal carers of foreign origin or care needs in the new labour market context of LTC.

Migrants and refugees may not be part of a local family. Albeit, they can be the ones who help European families the most. The European labor market has undergone rapid, influential changes, severely affecting both the economies of states and, consequently, the daily lives of individuals and their families. While the European market is in its raw form an enormous mass, one of the

smaller units to use and measure that mass is the family. The preference for this unit is also seen in Europe's Welfare State and its history. But they require care, as they grow older, while the rest of the healthier members become busier and perhaps somewhat stressed, in the presence of economic and labour-related challenges.

At the same time, Europe experiences influxes of migrants and refugees of separate origins. With no practical means to return to a normal life, they have to move forward. Simply said, they must be integrated, in a careful and thoughtful manner. The common denominator, hence, is the word care. The only thing that changes is whose turn it is to care for and whose to receive turn. Through this process, integration is tied to the Social Sector, which is vital for the functioning of today's European societies.

Is the Social Sector important for the European Union's Gross Domestic Product?

The Gross Domestic Product reflects strictly the size of an economy but not necessarily well-being. For classic economists, as well as for entrepreneurs of growth-oriented businesses, growth of an economy is actually the most important metric. However, the European Union recognizes the supporting forces and conditions needed for the qualitative aspects of growth, something often not entirely comprehended with numbers. After all, we have already translated the mass of the European economy into a beautiful agent.

Why are Social Services important?

While humans are capable of displaying great tenacity through hardships, one must not forget how vulnerable they can be – be it for a moment, for a temporary period or for the rest of their life. The first population that comes to mind is the elderly. Even due to positive factors, such as increased longevity, thanks to modern medicine generally improved quality of life, the European Union has a substantial elderly population, proportionally to the whole population (Liboreiro, 2023).

Nevertheless, the elderly are far from being the only population segment in need. Those in need can equally be children, of varying ages, persons with disabilities, persons with mental health problems, recovering persons, persons with addictions and any individual facing a vulnerable state or becoming vulnerable for a certain period of their life.

Other factors also increase the need for a bigger LTC sector, such as the shrinking of the family

size (OECD, 2011). With fewer members and frequent, even worse, unexpected dire economic periods, family members are spending more time at work, decreasing the amount of unpaid care. To add to that, wealthier societies are more likely to create demand for better quality more responsive LTC services.

With this analysis made, while Social Services may not increase the strength of the economy directly, it makes it stronger by addressing its hidden weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Addressing shortcomings often does not create immediate results but in the long run, it makes for a necessary investment. In this setting, the role of Human Resources Management can make a large difference at scale, generating compound social contributions. The role, is thus, connected not only to the interests of the company or the institution but also to the interests of vulnerable groups and broader society – creating stimulus for an inclusive economy, rather than a selfish one.

At the same time, Social Services constitute a great vehicle for integration, through which foreign workers gain access to welfare, and freedoms, which arise from an understanding of the regulatory framework, further education and improvement of health (De Haas, 2005). It is noteworthy that bringing more attention to the sector will also highlight the cases of foreign workers' issues and vulnerabilities in informal long-care work.

The nature of Long-Term Care and the Social Sector umbrella agrees with the goal of foreign workers' integration. This happens because both sides require investments – not necessarily expressed in the euro currency – but rather

time. Patients and users of services require an allocation of effort over long periods, while integration has also many stages that cannot be skipped and require maturity over time. This being said the relationship between the two highlights the importance of efficient staffing for the creation of valuable relationships within and outside work.

Self-Reflection

If you were to migrate to a different country, what would be the first steps you would take to improve your quality of life? What sorts of helpful interventions would you expect from the government or the company? Do you believe that migrating to a different continent or region comes with disproportionately bigger or smaller expectations?





2. EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Every professional journey starts with recruitment – the first impression, the expectations and the perspectives for fruitful cooperation. Participants should be able to create and use efficient recruitment strategies, job analysis methods, interviewing tactics, and moral selection procedures thanks to the curriculum.

Where do you look?

The first question to answer is where one can recruit the appropriate candidate. HR managers may utilise a variety of channels for recruitment. Nowadays, the first option that comes to mind are online platforms and job opportunities portals, such as Indeed, LinkedIn, and Xing along with local media outlets, which offer insights based on regional experience. In addition, employment services or employment departments can be of great help, since migrants and refugees may not always opt to use the internet to find a job. Oftentimes, they do not even have easy access to the internet or any access. Recruitment agencies may also be of great help, having their channels of communication, even with institutions and establishments in their countries of origin.

Keep in mind that migrants and refugees may be subscribed to local newspapers or portals available in their language. Moreover, owners or managers of ethnic restaurants, café shops or stores that import goods from abroad may also have a better picture of anyone looking for work.

Social media platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn are also leveraged to reach potential candidates, where even professional recruitment agencies are often engaged in searching for qualified individuals, even through community groups, which rapidly grow with mass invites.

Recruitment days

One very accessible and extroverted tactic is the so-called ‘recruitment days’. Though business-oriented, they can still be totally beneficial even in the context of the Social Sector and, in fact, any sector. For example, a foreign worker may get a realistic grasp of how a nursing facility operates, adjusting their expectations and picturing themselves how they would work there. Visualization is an underrated aspect of recruitment. If the candidate is able to see their



potential role realistically, they will also become more inclined towards choosing your institution or company.

Throughout the recruitment days, you may also propose the possibility of a small internship once the selection process is complete. The main audience for this approach is applicants who have no prior experience in LTC. The internship may vary in duration, with the possibility of being as short as 12 hours, providing a thorough picture of their responsibilities. The internship happens before the final decision is made, allowing the candidate to make a more conscious choice. If they accept, they will also be more committed, knowing that they made the decision with the availability of more information and involvement in the actual processes.

There is a considerable chance that foreign workers choose the sector out of necessity and not by choice. With far less financial stability than local populations, who may not be burdened by mortgages or have a safety net in place, foreign workers will make far more concessions. In light of this reality, one must view long-term staffing as their priority.

Make it easy to upload a CV

One may have the best Curriculum Vitae – but if they don't know where to upload it or where to send it, it may create a problem.

You will also greatly improve the chances of receiving a job application from a foreign worker if the native language of your country is not the only one available on the website. There are actually many reasons why a website should be available in multiple languages and this is certainly one of them.

The website should be mobile friendly too. As some migrants and refugees may be mostly smartphone users, they may get lost on a website, that is not optimised for mobile devices. That critical email or upload button can easily get lost if the website does not have a good architecture.

Food for thought

Besides online ads (e.g. Google ads) and online platforms, one of the best ways to make sure that your website appears as one of the top search results is Search Engine Optimisation. To put it simply, certain keywords can make your page more visible, especially if migrants and refugees are searching for them. If you were to collaborate with the Social Media Manager, what do you think would be the search terms foreign workers use to find a job?

But what if they don't have a CV?

Perhaps, they may be facing a temporary setback and not have one ready at the time they see the offer. Then, you could also be more lenient towards any alternative format, such as a video, provided that, of course, it reflects the genuine wish of the candidate to provide their valued services to people who require care.

The importance of employer branding

Rumours and feedback are spread rapidly. This can be especially true in smaller communities, where the information flows in smaller circles. Given this situation, employer branding is an extremely beneficial process, in order to attract as many applicants as possible. Particularly, the creation of a good image will make sure that foreign workers will be able to view the potential to work for the institution more positively and attract more labor.

Think about this for a moment. What sort of characteristics would you like to have your workplace associated with? What messages and values would be more important for the foreign worker, as opposed to a local resident?

Referral schemes

One popular way to attract potential workers from the networks of the existing ones is through remuneration for referring a friend or an acquaintance, provided that they stay working for a minimum amount of time. This ensures that the employment has covered some of the associated costs. Migrants and refugees are more likely to make or maintain friendships with persons of a similar profile (Comola and Mendola, 2015). Even if they do not come from the same country, they are experiencing common situations – living and integrating into a foreign country with a certain amount of hardships and burdens. As a direct consequence, they are more likely to refer somebody of the same background. To maximize the efficiency of the method, the referral bonus can be provided in installments, in order to create a degree of conditionality. The first instalment can be provided a few months after the newcomer begins working and the other once they have been working for a considerable amount of time when they are not considered newcomers anymore (for example one year).

Utilising Job Analysis

Have you noticed that some jobs are challenging to describe? Particularly, one phrase may not ring a bell, or provide a comprehensive picture of a person's responsibilities. This is also why candidates may be confused as to what they are expected to do. Recruiters must analyse the general framework of the position they

would like to offer and include the particular characteristics of their institution

Now, let's break down job analysis (Morgeson, Brannick & Levine, 2020):

In any organization, the term **„job“** encompasses a group of positions that share common traits. For instance, the job of a ‚Nursing Assistant‘ involves a range of positions with duties that are alike in nature.

Each job is made up of various **„positions“**, which are defined by a specific set of responsibilities assigned to an individual worker. An example of a position is one that specializes in providing care to residents with dementia, which requires a unique set of skills and knowledge.

A **„duty“** within a job refers to the different collections of tasks that are aligned with the overarching objectives of that job. Duties are like the chapters in a book that structure the narrative of the job's role. Personal care duties, such as bathing, dressing, and eating, are typical examples of duties that nursing assistants might perform.

„Duties“ are further broken down into **„tasks“**, which are a series of activities with distinct start and end points. Administering medication at specific times of the day is a task that falls under the duties of a nursing assistant.

An **„activity“** is a term that refers to a bundle of elements that come together to fulfil the requirements of the job. It is a subset of a task that contributes to the larger goal. Recording the vital signs of residents each morning and evening is an example of an activity that nursing assistants may be responsible for.

Lastly, the „**element**“ represents the most granular unit of work within a job. It is a singular action that is part of an activity. For instance, placing the blood pressure cuff on a resident’s arm is an element of the activity of recording vital signs. Each element is a building block that contributes to the completion of an activity, a task, a duty, and ultimately, the position within the job.

A job analysis helps you with recruitment, by understanding every little detail concerning the characteristics of the duties. It mirrors the examination of the candidate’s profile. In many instances, a recruitment process may focus on the candidate’s characteristics, while deviating when it comes to the characteristics of the job itself. Through a proper job analysis, however, one creates a valid checklist, making it easier to assess the requirements for the post more objectively and avoiding the potential pitfalls of biases.

Moreover, two different jobs can have similar elements, activities or tasks, meaning that although in title two professionals may differ,

their skills may be transversal, making them a right fit. This leads to the creation of a job family. (University of Nebraska–Lincoln Human Resources, n.d.). In turn, it makes mapping job progression paths easier, which is likewise vital to communicating with an employee. Note that this is extremely important when employing migrants and refugees who are academically trained professionals, as they will much more be oriented towards organizational and managerial posts. This means that even if they can only work starting on an entry – level, due to the needs of your institutions, it is best to set a development path to retain a particularly skilled worker (Rothgang, Engelke, 2009)

There is a great emphasis on social sustainability, which is defined as the creation of sustainable and successful environments capable of promoting wellbeing, by also understanding what people need from the places they work and live (Rogelj et al., 2023). In simple means, age is more than a number, as there is a qualitative dimension to the problem. It reinforces the need to integrate foreign workers to additionally improve the very services they offer, through better understanding and communication.

3. ADOPTING A RETENTION-CENTRIC APPROACH

The initiative should promote a retention-centric strategy that emphasizes the development of positive workplace cultures, employee engagement, recognition, professional growth, and well-being assistance.

What contributes to labour shortages is the fact that workers are not retained for a sufficient period of time. It happens in two distinct ways – on the organizational level and the level of the industry. Simply put, if the worker quits the organization, they are also possibly quitting the industry, moving to a different pool of talents and European Needs. In regard to this, the LTC sector is facing pressure from both growing demand and turnover.

The Vicious Cycle of Labour Shortage and Non-interest

As there are certain labor shortages in the market, it is very likely that employers feel pressure to make recruitments of workers who

are not the right fit for the work. This applies even to workers who have prior experience in the sector. To examine beyond the surface, one should probe and see the reasons behind their previous choices as well, rather than focusing only on the motivations for the current job opening.

At the same time, limiting the pool of foreign workers only exacerbates the labor shortages and creates the need for longer shifts. However, long shifts such as 12-hour ones have to be reduced as much as possible. If required, their scheduling, and especially rescheduling, must be properly communicated, and the conditions adjusted to accommodate the individual needs of the foreign employees. Moreover, you should offer the opportunity for flexible hours as a worker might be willing to help with extra hours but have administrative obligations in the morning, or spend time with their children after school, to provide a few examples. In any

case, you should diagnose the situation to see what the exact problem is. It opens the door for arrangements that fit both parties.

Overall, some alternatives could be implemented in order to maximise the chances of retention. One interesting regime to examine is job sharing (Duke University, n.d.) to cover needs partially. Job sharing occurs when a full-time position is split between two individuals, while each has the responsibility for the total success.

Understanding a person's intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.

Imagine a juxtaposition – a professional guitarist who succeeded in following their passion and a customer service employee who only chose this role because no other position was available at that time. Who would be more likely to do what they do for free?

The guitarist is guided by intrinsic motivation, which refers to the undertaking of an activity as a result of one's desire and personal preferences, whereas extrinsic motivation stems from an external reward (Nickerson, 2023).

Oftentimes, a foreign worker who has a weak economic background will be guided by extrinsic motivation, while intrinsic is often considered a luxury. Being able to read the reasons behind each individual's background, you will be able to understand what makes a person contribute to reaching the extra mile.

At the same time, an employer or manager may falsely believe that foreign workers are only driven by necessity in their new home. Going beyond bias, the HR department must proceed with understanding the personal motivations of each for-

foreign worker. This will allow them to better align the needs of the tasks and employee development with what drives the foreign workers to excel.

The Overjustification Effect

Did you know that having too many incentives could actually do more harm than good? This is called the overjustification effect (The Decision Lab, n.d.). If the employee is already motivated and has a clear picture of their mission in the organization, there is no immediate reason to overwhelm them with reasons why they should keep up the good work. In simple math, a strongly intrinsically motivated person will likely be more engaged than a person who has multiple incentives as a consequence of the institution's design.

Sick days and leaves

Generally, there are policies, which aim to distribute days off across the span of the year. The reason is twofold. On the one hand, it is arguably more beneficial to have more holidays during diversified periods, being in sync with the vacations of other family members and friends. On the other hand, it is usually harder to motivate an employee to become productive when working after a long leave. However, this also happens because there are no sufficient provisions for a long absence. A proper plan would actually help with the process of gradually entering into the required more.

To add to that, migrants and refugees may have differentiated reasons when it comes to taking leave. One prominent example is that migrants often want to visit their home countries. While a local may need an hour or two to reach their hometown, a migrant may take even a day to reach their country.

Developing positive workplace cultures

In any scenario, the return must take place at a supportive positive workplace. It encompasses a culture of proactivity and seamless communication, creating bridges that lead to tasks, explaining difficulties and finding solutions to them. According to Panagiotakopoulos (2016), the organisational culture includes the dominant values and visions, while also setting the standard for the expected behaviour.

You might be wondering how to create a positive workplace, as it may seem like a subjective theme. It can start with small and simple practices: showing care for each other, such as offering lunch and organizing dinners, celebrating birthdays or doing gift exchanges.

The importance is in making sure these small moves are authentic and look sincere, especially as a foreigner may be having certain trust issues and vice versa. To ensure this, it is crucial to reflect the organization's benefits and values.

Staying Healthy

It is known that LTC may entail harsh conditions, which can also increase the risk towards occupational health. To promote a healthy proactive attitude towards health, since it is much better to prevent health complications rather than deal with a problem once it has fully materialised itself. Essentially, there is a virtuous circle between employee satisfaction, mental health and occupational health risk - one improves the other two. To add to that, the reduction of occupational health risks will also encourage them to improve workplace safety, including care for peripheral conditions, such

as hygiene (Shan, Liu, Gu, & Zhao, 2022). To avoid risky behaviour that deprioritises health care, it would be a great measure to actually provide paid hours when the foreign worker has an appointment with the doctor (Sheldon, Holliday, Titova, & Benson, 2019).

General and specialized benefits

You may provide some general benefits, such as discounted meals and free drinks, as they constitute a big share of a foreign worker's consumer basket. Some benefits are also not equally attractive to all. For example, parking space is not useful for everybody, some people may prefer a yearly bus ticket for commuting. Other migrants may prefer to have some kindergarten spots if they have children; it is even better if children of local staff are in the same kindergarten, providing opportunities for dialogue between the parents. Other great benefits are of course health checkups and dental cleaning, along with other activities related to physical and mental health and wellness in general.

Career progression

An obvious key driving reason for migration is finding a better future. This doesn't stop at the arrival to the country. Far from it, foreign workers will be more than happy to work knowing they can improve their positions, salaries and benefits. Therefore, creating a clear career progression plan (The Adecco Group, n.d.) helps the foreign worker have a more concrete understanding of what they are expected to gain for their hard work. Simultaneously, employees understand exactly how valued they are – that they are viewed as valuable assets rather than short-term solutions that can be easily replaced.





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4. DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Give participants the knowledge and abilities to evaluate pertinent HR indicators and use data to optimize staffing decisions, assuring an approach to recruiting and retention that is based on solid evidence.

Numbers and Humans

At first seeing humans as numbers sounds like a cold perspective, dehumanizing work and effort. In reality, data is a tool, which can be utilised for a very human result. HR is a horizontal function, exposing them to all sorts of departments and activities related to them. This essentially means that data can be used as metrics in a multitude of ways to predict or analyse potential correlations to performance and even emotions. What do emotions have in common with numbers? Their importance is very often underestimated. Generally speaking, data in HR constitutes the roadmap whenever there is doubt or bias (Cambridge Spark, 2023). The problem with being subjective is that people do not actually understand when they can be subjective. Data, however, is relatively objective. Think of the following example, when you are

assessing employee satisfaction and feedback, it is crucial to collect data for the general picture. Otherwise, certain qualitative reports may likely affect judgement and priorities.

The sum of data can greatly contribute not only to more objective decision-making on every aspect of Human Resources Management but also create a trail of calculations, mapping the rationale of every decision. This way, the HR professional can see the evolution of choices and hold a sense of accountability.

KPIs as data

The most common perception of KPIs comes from the point of view of the employee. Particularly, it becomes the measure according to which, one can may be rewarded or as a map showing where one can improve themselves. However, a seasoned eye sees KPIs for what they are – the quantification of performance. On a micro level, it strictly provides information on the level of an individual. On an institutional level, however, KPI measurements are data, which can be processed along with other variables.

The Benefits of Employee Shift Management Software

When it comes to the LTC, shift management is crucial to maintain a proper work-life balance and maximise efficiency. Because the worker provides care to a person, rather than completing an administrative task, the behavior of the care recipient also varies throughout the span of a day. That being said, this is a very fine instance where KPI can function as data. The changes in performance during shifts can be analysed in relation to certain conditions and therefore tweak those conditions, in order to see how they could improve performance.

Depending on the sum of the responsibilities, shift management can also be outsourced to shift management solutions providers. They have certain benefits, such as good risk management, expectations management and changes done according to an effective protocol. Such a specialised provider can also be used to integrate and adopt some great practices in the long run, if applicable with your capabilities as the human resources manager.

Keep some data in this bag. You will unpack this pack at a later section

The use of Artificial Intelligence for HR

Although human resources constitute a branch focusing on humans, it is very much affected by Artificial Intelligence. In a previous section, we mentioned how migrants or refugees might not necessarily be in a place to create a CV. Yet, Artificial Intelligence or more broadly algorithms are frequently used to do the initial screening of applications (USC Annenberg School for

Communication and Journalism, 2023). This could mean that even if a CV is submitted, the algorithmic bias could potentially cut out a great candidate for the job.

However, even if this sort of shortcomings were corrected in the future, bias may still occur against selected individuals or groups. AI, as an interactive agent, can potentially mirror the decision-making process of HR managers according to the policies of the institution. This way, while an AI can simulate an interview in the near future, as a direct alternative to video interviews, it may still hold biased opinions, even if the candidate is not cut during screening.

The same applies to other uses of AI. It is best that HR has a clear picture of the way AI models, as their ease hides the dangers of unsupervised choices. That being said, although AI and software can free up time and make an alternative for more manual data analysis methods, it must be checked from a different angle: the use of clauses and precautions, checking for the functionality of the model and periodically reviewing results for potential mistakes.

Food for thought

While we are working on ways to address AI and algorithmic bias, we may now proceed to the discussion regarding bias coming from humans to humans, particularly in the context of Diversity and Inclusion.

Self Reflection

You are introduced to a new AI assistant tool at work, which can find which benefits employees prefer. How will you check whether the processing it does is actually beneficial?

5. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

With a focus on cultural competence, the program ought to manage the hiring of foreign workers as well as the development of a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Is Diversity Different?

Diversity and inclusion are much more than a trendy business term. Unfortunately, public discourse and media, much due to the popularity of the topic, display it as one concept, which applies to all scenarios and settings. The first step to defy this perception is to see something in the lives of foreign workers themselves. Do they all come from the same country? The obvious answer is no. Each and everyone has their story. This leads us to enter a different mindset, identifying what is a commonality and what is not.

Self Reflection

This exercise will help you develop an understanding of commonalities and their importance. Consider the following:

1. What common characteristics do foreign workers share?
2. What common characteristics do migrants share?
3. What common characteristics do refugees share?
4. What common characteristics do foreign workers share with local employees who have children?

As can be seen, one can identify many common characteristics. At the same time, when breaking down foreign workers and local employees into smaller bits, it is apparent that the matter is rather complex. Hence, while diversity does entail basic human values, such as dignity and respect (Buckinghamshire Council, n.d.), cultivating warm and welcoming attitudes, cultures, identities and circumstances may vastly change the methods through which one must implement relevant policies. The dominant factor in the case of foreign workers is multiculturalism.

Thus even though the institutions at hand are not inherently multicultural, the movement of workers from abroad creates similarities to this context. Therefore, even if the institution is monocultural, it is gradually transitioning towards multiculturalism (D'Errico, 1990). To provide an example of a good practice,

in multicultural organisations managers ask employees about their culture. Then, this information is taken into account and turned into incentives according to the special characteristics of the culture (Liu, Shuler and Zhang, 2013).

Diversity and Inclusion are not only about cultures

At the same time, it is crucial to remember that inclusion is not simply about culture – it is also about everything else that makes a person. This translates into a different aspect of diversity, which is best understood with a practical example. Assume that one of your foreign workers also happens to be a mother. Which choice is more rational?

- a. Only address incentives and needs based on the person's culture
- b. Address all situations, which arise from both the cultural background and motherhood.

Addressing only one aspect of a person's identity is sometimes not sufficient. Usually, it is better to address at least a portion of matters and issues than none. However, for a truly

diverse, inclusive and equitable approach, the combination of factors and unique conditions must be calculated. This is not too different from analysing data with multiple variables.

This is, in essence, the concept of intersectionality (Bashford, 2019). Rather than viewing identities in absolute terms, this theoretical concept helps HR managers avoid biases and inspect the individuality of the worker. Of course, this does not necessarily create costs. Simply because somebody is different in a different way, the solution one must provide might simply be a few tweaks away.

Inclusion and trust

Previously we already mentioned the importance of providing a clear path for improvement and professional development. This is important both for inclusion and the actual generation of trust. When the manager or the recruiter are migrants or refugees themselves, this sends the message to foreign candidates that indeed they are welcome to work beyond an entry-level invisible barrier. This trust, then, creates a spillover effect for greater teamwork with a common advancement.





6. TEAMWORK AND POLICY-SHAPING

Participants should develop their ability to cooperate with leadership to design business policies that emphasise employee retention and promote a positive workplace culture.

The Importance of Teamwork

Can you imagine if you had to look for a couple of patients 24/7 on your own? Teamwork is the essence of all organizations, as it is what builds an engine that manages to satisfy the needs beyond what one person can offer to one. If you think about it, even if one dedicated their whole day as a care provider, they would still probably need to reserve some hours during the night to cover every conceivable need of a person.

From the moment of the interview

The interview is best done with the presence of the direct superior and a small number of company employees, about two. The selection should also include a tour of the facilities of the company or institution. This is even more important if the supervisor is a foreign worker, as their presence will instil confidence.

Meetings and feedback

Migrants often hold back what they want to say, either because they are afraid or because they simply cannot express it in the local language. In the first case, a truly positive work culture should solve the matter. The second instance, however, highlights the significance of language barriers. In this regard, frequent meetings can be helpful in monitoring and developing a bridge of communication and mapping reactions when speaking with that person.

Weekly meetings among employees can be helpful, both to create the bigger picture and to see where everybody is standing. This will also help refugees communicate with native speakers at the workplace.

Formal and Informal Groups

An organisation has both formal and informal groups. A department, for example, is a formal group and is part of the organisation's architecture. An example of an informal group is a group of newcomers who have become

a company of friends because they are all newcomers with less experience. Because foreign workers have common characteristics, they also have a tendency to turn into informal groups. While this has its benefits, this poses risks if the members of that group are not interacting with local staff, hindering their integration.

Create smaller teams

Logic would have it that to mitigate the negative effects of informal groups, one would have to create bigger groups or units. Such groups would contain more individuals, increasing the chances, correct?

Not quite. Have you noticed that smaller teams are more likely to become tied together? Certainly, a reduced amount of workers per group will have more intense social links. By design, local workers have to communicate with foreign ones more frequently. The leader of the team will also be able to learn more about each person individually and broadly regarding the whole group. To add to that, there is a potential for productivity to increase (Morgan, 2015) due to the fact that in smaller groups it is easier to map the contributions of each team member. Another advantage comes from the ability to cultivate a sense of reciprocity, joint effort and commitment (Urbanski, 2023). This comes, of course, with the cost of coordinating a bigger amount of teams. However, with the help of HR, proper coordination can be achieved, making this a great investment.

Team building trips

There are many team bonding activities that can be implemented in order to reinforce the social links of a team. Compared to this, however, Team-building trips are a much greater way to create

or deepen existing social relationships between employees. It is a very interesting method, as it involves a physical space way beyond the usual place of interactions. Consequently, even the associations made are not anchored in the same setting. Do you need to travel somewhere far? There is no need. Places in close proximity are most likely unknown to foreign workers, which is why even such an arrangement just beside the city will be a compelling choice.

Policy shaping

One of the best ways to value the employee is to involve them in policy-shaping of the institution. Policies are general in scope; they thus not only make their quality of work time better, it additionally prove that their share in decision-making also affects the local workers. If you were a foreign worker, how would you feel if only the local workers were in charge? Probably you would not be as committed to the measures that arise. However, if foreign workers are part of policy shaping, they are partially responsible for any new measures and therefore they will more likely be engaged with new procedures.

Remember the data pouch from the section before?

It's here again! It reminds us that data is somewhat a currency – in the sense that all people and stakeholders will find it valuable, contrary to opinions and educated guesses. As you have noticed, already the amount of work put into materialising positive changes for the foreign workers is immense. To rephrase the above, data can be used to shape policies because the deductions from them can be universally agreed upon (BMZ, n.d.). This way, even foreign workers who do not wish to participate in decision-making will also be more likely to accept the measures.

Emotions and values.

Addressing emotions in a team is equally important because they reflect the perceptions of individuals, even if it is in a non-verbal format (Panagiotakopoulos, 2016). For example, a person may not explicitly their their disapproval of foreign workers but they may be able to communicate their stance with body language or intonation. Therefore, HR managers and managers in general, guided by HR, should be able to identify the beliefs held by members of a team and attempt to neutralise the behaviour of persons whose values are not in line with diversity and inclusion.

A frequent source of negative emotions in a team also comes in the form of employment termination. If a colleague quits or gets fired, it may have adverse effects on the productivity of workers. Tensions are created as workers may be afraid that they will be the next target. Moreover, in the case of the Social Sector, more workload is allocated to fewer employees in the workforce, placing further stress. Another reason workers might leave after somebody else is fired is because they are unable to cope with this pressure, the result being a resignation (Jacoby, 2015).

7. CAPSTONE PROJECT PROFICIENCY

After completing the project, participants should be able to create and present a thorough recruitment and retention strategy, demonstrating their command of the required abilities.

Are you ready to challenge yourself with your three-step capstone project?

Scenario 1

As a Human Resources Manager in a long-term care facility, designed a culturally sensitive recruitment campaign targeting foreign workers. Can you conduct a market analysis to identify optimal regions for recruitment, considering economic, social, and cultural factors? What would be the more effective recruitment channels suited to these regions? Address language barriers and form an image of a supportive work environment. Evaluate the potential challenges and benefits of recruiting from these areas.

Scenario 2

Can you try to develop an integration program for newly recruited foreign workers? This program should include mentorship, cultural competence training for existing staff, and strategies to foster an inclusive workplace. Address cross-cultural communication issues by identifying potential misunderstandings and proposing solutions. Assess how different cultural norms could potentially impact teamwork and the work environment, creating a plan to facilitate effective intercultural interactions.

Scenario 3

Can you improve the retention rates of foreign workers by conducting a detailed survey to gather feedback about their experiences? Analyse data to interpret the results, identifying key patterns and trends. Develop a retention strategy that addresses immediate concerns and anticipates long-term matters and issues. Focus on enhancing job satisfaction and promoting professional growth, considering the unique needs and expectations of foreign workers in your facility.





8. STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT

Encourage stakeholder cooperation to establish channels for talent development in the LTC industry, including cooperation with universities and other institutions.

Throughout this conversation, the focus is on the relationship between a foreign worker and the institution they are working for. This view is unidimensional as it ignores the rest of the workers' lives. While neglecting life in work-life balance is a problem, which applies even to the management of local staff, the routines of foreign workers' lives are likewise misunderstood. However, through cooperation with stakeholders, the organization can see more clearly the methods to integrate workers and provide a quality lifestyle.

The cooperation can start with institutions of the same profile as yours. In order to manage short-term shortages of employees, two organisations in the LTC sector may provide workers through staff-sharing agreements. This measure, on the one hand, strengthens the links between the organisations and on the other hand offers more ground for employees to explore, potentially improving the communication skills of foreign workers. It is certainly different to cooperate with the personnel they meet on rare occasions. Albeit, with the support of compatible policies, they can greatly





improve communication skills and diversity of interactions. The same applies to educational institutions. Foreign workers can get in touch with students and interns, offering them value, while also absorbing fresh perspectives.

Cooperating with your own Social Media and External Relations Departments

One of the more cost-efficient ways to increase the chances of collaboration with stakeholders is by developing HR's relationship with the departments or persons involved in Social Media and External Relations. The content and communications they handle can not only serve the organisation's visibility as a whole but also publicise your specific actions, attitudes and generally the willingness to cooperate with other stakeholders. While this may look like a passive measure, it may actually be the difference between a successful and unsuccessful

active approach. That is because the image your organisation shows can define how willing the other side will be to cooperate, on any matter. Hence, HR is a horizontal department in this way as well.

Cooperating with Municipalities and NGOs

There is a great amount of undiscovered potential in cooperation with both municipalities and NGOs. Usually, they have a complementary role between themselves, achieving synergies and covering gaps in between. The reason why these two types of stakeholders are highly compatible with foreign workers is the social nature of the matter. The integration of foreign workers far extends the limits of the workplace. The successful implementation of this process relies on the collaboration between all spheres of life represented by the welfare state and social economy rather than simply social business.

9. CONTINUOUS UPSKILLING

The curriculum should place a strong emphasis on the value of ongoing education and professional development for both the participants and the organizations they represent.

The Value of Learning and Development

Have you ever felt like you need to move on to a different place because your development stays stable? Through learning something new, there is a satisfying feeling of progress, which, upon self-reflection, brings joy to an employee. This is all the more true for a foreign worker who is in a new setting. Many migrants and refugees may feel isolated in a foreign country (Pike & Crocker, 2020), which in turn could impose a feeling of stagnation, with no perspectives for development. Moreover, by improving performance through training, foreign employees will enjoy themselves more, seeing the fruits of the investment in their talent. It is the same feeling as improving in sports!

Provide Training on other Skills

Another type of training is on skills that have no immediate impact on the job performance.

While not leisure skills, employees will appreciate learning something new, and useful but at the same time not with an association to an obligation. It is crucial to note that some skills may not just be useful yet. For example, your institution may not be using high-end technology to track the health of a patient. However, to provide an example, as digital transformation is rapidly spreading over sectors, upskilling your employees in digital skills may be the right option for the unforeseen future, even if seems unrelated. That being said, you may nudge foreign workers to pick up a new skill, for the entertainment of it, rather than for the work. Of course, some will be more motivated to pick another skill for work. In that case, it is at your disposal to find the bridge between the skill and the task, in the present or the future.

Language, Tongue

One particular benefit, which is both great for integration and retention is the provision of language courses. Not only does this make daily interactions better, improving quality of life but also this results in better communication within the team. Language is practically universal and



applies everywhere. It is also one of the most important factors for integration, being both essential and acting as behavioural proxies for measuring integration (Sturm, 2016).

To expand on the professional aspects, a very large portion of the elderly population who require care are not fluent in a non-native language. Consequently, the native language is one of the few available means to effectively communicate with them. They will also develop smoother relations with them, providing better services and raising the overall satisfaction of both sides.

Getting help from outside

Many trainings can be conducted from outside the organization. For instance, an external trainer can coach, instruct or offer educational material, tailored or not. Such trainings are great for topics and subjects your staff cannot offer. For example, it may even be a soft skill, such as time management. However, even when it comes to skills and topics that your organisation can teach about, some would still prefer it was done by an expert, because the trainer, because of their specialization, is seen as an authority (Morgia, n.d.).

Mentoring is Invaluable

Having somebody to guide you through the initial stages of your career is an invaluable asset

for personal development and productivity (University of Southampton, n.d.). Essentially, mentoring personalises the relationship of the foreign worker with their workspace. Rather than simply operating within an organizational structure, the employee associates their tasks with a friendly coworker who is there to provide help on anything they might need.

However, contrary to popular belief, mentoring can actually be implemented at later stages of one's career too. Specifically, as long as there is a paved path for the employee's improvement, there will also be something to teach, something to improve.

Intergenerational Mentoring

Seasoned foreign workers are, of course, more than capable of mentoring new hires. However, there is value in the reverse too, in the form of intergenerational mentoring (Richardson, 2023). Sometimes new or young individuals may come up with fresh ideas and innovative techniques and measures. Particularly, if you are collaborating with educational institutions, they may act in the role of hubs for innovation, piloting new methodologies and technologies for the Long Term Care sector. In practice, the young worker will bring the novelty, the new idea and the more experienced foreign workers, along with the rest of the staff will be able to put those ideas to the test.

10. GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

Provide participants with a broader perspective on recruitment and retention, and incorporate global best practices from the European context.

Because Human Psychology is a Global

The integration of foreign workers is a matter that falls within the scope of globalization. Consequently, the European HR landscape is evolving to tackle them by implementing some global practices. Yet, of course, individual psychology remains of paramount importance, as outlined by Guszczka and Schwartz (2016). Foreign employees often carry additional burdens, such as cultural adaptation and familial concerns. A key aspect of addressing these needs lies in the ongoing assessment and validation of HR practices, ensuring they remain highly relevant. In simple words, human psychology and behaviour is a great bridge to start implementing some best practices from around the world.

Life is not a Game - but Gamification helps

Gamification is emerging as a global best practice in this context. By turning routine tasks and training into engaging game-like experiences, HR can significantly enhance

employee engagement. This approach is not simply about entertainment; it's a powerful tool for illustrating career progression and fostering a sense of achievement.

To provide an example of Gamification, foreign caregivers can get badges or points whenever they complete a training level, which amplifies a sense of achievement.

However, it is important to remember that not every culture or individual is compatible with this approach. In certain cultures, there are general expectations to perform well without a special reward or motivating factor (Commisceo Global, n.d). Requesting employee feedback on these initiatives is crucial to ensure they are inclusive and effective.

One thing to add is that gamification is not necessarily individualistic, as it can also be implemented in teams or across departments. Such techniques can be used when there are generational differences present in the workplace, particularly when younger individuals are in supervisory roles, adding another layer of complexity. Gamification can bridge these generational gaps, creating a common ground

where all employees, irrespective of age or background, can interact, play and integrate. For instance, cross-generational teams can handle an imaginative quest of handling a virtual LTC facility.

Fostering Social Values

Techniques such as job shadowing and “bringing your child to work days” (Kislik, 2023), help with the integration of foreign workers but also communicate that the institutions have a forward-looking mindset, setting the pace for future generations. In this regard, not only does the institution create a message of acceptance and encouragement but also actively engages with individuals of younger profiles, bringing them closer and becoming closer through this social cycle.

A nuanced approach is needed when guiding employee behaviour and choices, especially in sensitive areas like refugee integration. Sanders et al. (2019) highlight the concept of nudging - influencing choices without limiting them. This strategy can be effective in gently steering employees towards inclusive practices without imposing restrictions.

Promote Physical Wellbeing and Fitness

We have already highlighted the importance of physical health for productivity and stronger mental health. However, an overlooked part of this is fitness (Cheng and Li, 2023). Being fit improves general mood and greatly assists with combating burnout while enhancing cognitive performance and avoiding physical injuries that can occur from LTC, e.g. when having to lift or carry someone. You may also offer free participation at running events, combining

team bonding, with physical activity and a sense of accomplishment and recognition at the end of a race.

However, many employees find it rather hard to allocate time to physical activities. A gym may be far away and require preparations. Moreover, foreign workers specifically may be living much further from the location of work as opposed to local ones, making this an even harder case. For this reason, some space may be used for building a gym at the actual institution, allowing everyone to work out before or after training. While this may seem like a large investment, a common space of leisure, such as this, allows communication across functions, further reinforcing a sense of belonging.

Work is also a space where food is consumed since it usually takes 8 or more hours per day. Unfortunately, in between, many employees do not consume the appropriate width of food options. One beneficial measure is to replace all snacks with fruit (Hutchinson, Howlett, & Wilson, 2013) since it has a direct result in reducing the consumption of processed food.

Building Resilience Through Risk Management

What do you do when an accident happens? How do you deal with 70% of workers being sick? Hypothetical questions, starting from procedural ones to large-scale ones guide the risk management done by HR managers. Crisis management includes signal detection, crisis preparation, crisis containment and recovery, no-fault learning and redesign. With this in mind, training in crisis management may not yield immediate results but will certainly dampen the impact of a potential crisis.

11. LIAISON WITH SECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS

Ensure that the curriculum is up to date and in line with the shifting demands of the labour market.

Did you know that LTC is the fastest-growing social expenditure in the European Union? In particular, it is expected to rise from 1.7% to 2.5% of GDP in the period 2019-2050 (European Commission, 2021). Having viewed multiple aspects of Foreign Worker HR Management, let us now review some of the relevant Sectoral Developments!

Increasing Attention on Informal Care

Informal care is most often provided free of charge to relatives. Following this rationale, informal care is often provided unofficially as well. Stemming from this condition, a large number of informal caregivers do not receive adequate or any training. Hence, agencies that are not providing adequate resources ought to be pressured into coordinated action.

Utilising Training Centres for Informal Caregivers

One practice involves small groups of informal caregivers in small groups gathered in Training Centers, where they can learn or hone their caring practices. A training centre includes a furnished apartment, simulating typical households with an addition of tools and aids, which make care easier. Moreover, by observing the differences between a normal apartment and a well-equipped one, LTC workers will have a more complete view of what needs to be adapted.

Legacy of COVID-19 and Assisted Living

An interesting fact is that COVID-19 affected the home healthcare market, allowing a larger proportion of patients to be monitored for chronic diseases and others at home (Mordor Intelligence, n.d.).

This rationale is quite similar to the growth of Assisted Living or AL (Cornell, Zhang, & Thomas, 2020). As some persons require a lower

degree of care, the 24/7 services model may not be needed or be too intense for them, Assisted Living provides a more casual setting, focusing on quality of life. As it does not require any skilled nursing care, its threshold skills-wise is lower, allowing greater participation. It is noteworthy that similarly to the developments in informal care, this should be used as an opportunity to develop and train LTC employees rather than lower standards.

Self Reflection

What possible frameworks, protocols or cooperation could be possibly set to allocate existing and new foreign workers in a way that makes sense from both sides? Do you think that

facts like these help you understand why Human Resources Managers should have commercial awareness as well?

Use of high-end technology

With the rise of the Internet of Things and the Internet of Everything, with high utilization of sensors, components, data and automation, more smart healthcare solutions are to be provided digitally supporting routine tasks and procedures. This has an effect on the analysis of symptoms, medication, modes of monitoring and practically everything revolving around Long-Term Care. Smart technology can also assist with some administrative tasks and wrap around procedural requirements.

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Notes

