

# Career Effectiveness and Lifelong Learning in a Knowledge-Based Economy

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**Abstract.** The top companies in each field of activity are trying nowadays to hold the existing talents and to attract new ones from the labour market. And this is not all. They are trying to develop them so that they become 100% effective. Holding effective people within the organisations leads to the effectiveness of the company implemented strategy and the employers' career.

**Keywords:** career effectiveness, attitude, adaptability, lifelong learning.

## 1. Introduction

Starting the last decade, along with the progress of the knowledge based economy and the increasing number of strategic and innovative companies, developing a career in a certain field of interest may seem a very achievable goal.

“In a dynamic environment, continuously changing, the necessity of permanent education is very much present”<sup>3</sup>, together with the will to have a good performance in the closer career.

“One of the most important and very complex issues of career management is given by its effectiveness. In an organizational environment, the career effectiveness is very well appreciated from both , the individual and company point of view”<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. The Importance of Lifelong Learning for Career Development

The specialists are trying to find answers and arguments to questions such as :

What are the obstacles in ones career development?

What measures do the organizations take in order to help achieving successful careers for each of their employees?

Which are the most important means in order to obtain career effectiveness?

There are some career effectiveness criteria that should be taken into consideration, both from the individual and organization point of view: “career performance, the attitude towards career, career adaptability and career identity.”<sup>5</sup>

As the career performance concerns, the main indicators are the salary and the position within the company. It is of a main importance to also consider if the performance evaluation system of the company is

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<sup>4</sup> Ibidem 1

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem 1

efficient and followed by a very challenging reward system. Those indicators must be taken into consideration only if there is an individual need to achieve the performance imposed by the company.

The individual's attitude towards developing a career is determinant for its effectiveness as the positive attitudes lead to positive implications for both individual and organization. The persons who developed a career until a certain stage without presenting a positive attitude towards it are the persons who whether have been forced by particular circumstances to choose or they have been imposed to do that. These persons will present to a given moment a low career effectiveness.

The knowledge one receives along the life long learning process will not be revealed entirely unless there is a certain adaptability of the individual career with the sudden and frequent changes of the market and furthermore of the organization.

The individuals' capacity to adapt to new changes in technological and economic circumstances will lead to the development of a success career in any field of interest.

As the career identity, each individual must set his or her goals, objectives and the means to achieve them based on his or her own possibilities and value system.

The individual level determinants refer to the individual's ability to take initiative and to make constructive changes in order to obtain success and efficiency in their career.

	Employer	Non-formal educ. & training instit.	Fomal educ. instit.	Comm. Instit. where educ. & training is not main activity	Em- ployers' org., chamber of com- merce	Non- comm. instit. (e.g. library)	Non- profit assoc.	Individ.	Trade union	Other
<b>EU</b>	38.3	16.5	10.4	8.9	5.0	4.5	4.3	4.3	1.4	4.0
<b>Belgium</b>	41.7	7.3	15.2	8.9	2.8	7.1	7.4	5.6	0.7	0.6
<b>Bulgaria</b>	68.8	14.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	5.8	0.7	1.1	0.2	0.2
<b>Czech Republic</b>	42.9	27.9	10.7	7.6	1.8	2.1	1.5	3.2	0.6	1.1
<b>Denmark</b>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Germany</b>	42.4	14.7	4.8	13.8	4.8	6.2	5.3	5.8	1.1	0.5
<b>Estonia</b>	29.2	34.4	10.0	9.4	1.2	3.9	2.1	2.5	5.5	1.7
<b>Ireland</b>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Greece</b>	36.0	12.1	14.6	13.6	3.3	5.2	3.2	1.4	2.3	4.8
<b>Spain</b>	19.9	26.2	9.7	5.0	6.7	4.5	5.4	2.9	4.2	11.5
<b>France</b>	25.4	2.9	1.9	6.3	.	.	.	1.7	.	60.2
<b>Italy</b>	27.6	8.5	12.9	8.0	12.9	2.2	4.4	6.3	1.3	11.3
<b>Cyprus</b>	27.1	19.3	5.4	10.1	1.3	15.5	7.1	12.9	0.9	0.3
<b>Latvia</b>	42.6	21.3	13.4	6.8	2.7	1.6	2.2	2.1	0.2	5.2
<b>Lithuania</b>	14.5	28.7	20.8	15.0	9.2	.	1.4	8.7	0.4	.
<b>Luxembourg</b>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Hungary</b>	0.6	32.0	7.0	3.5	32.8	6.2	0.1	1.9	13.1	2.7
<b>Malta</b>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Netherlands</b>	38.6	.	38.2	.	.	.	4.7	2.1	1.9	11.8
<b>Austria</b>	27.7	21.8	6.7	12.4	4.6	1.4	4.9	4.5	0.3	14.2
<b>Poland</b>	20.8	49.9	13.1	6.1	1.7	.	2.2	3.8	0.2	2.1
<b>Portugal</b>	40.7	20.9	9.1	8.4	2.3	4.5	5.5	1.4	1.4	5.8
<b>Romania</b>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Slovenia</b>	11.8	44.6	8.7	8.0	20.8	.	3.9	1.9	0.3	.
<b>Slovakia</b>	40.0	28.2	17.0	7.5	2.8	.	0.7	1.8	0.1	1.1
<b>Finland</b>	36.0	10.1	8.8	1.1	6.7	29.5	0.8	3.0	3.0	.
<b>Sweden</b>	45.5	14.6	4.2	17.1	3.9	3.4	5.6	2.5	2.0	0.5
<b>United Kingdom</b>	50.2	8.2	11.1	.	7.0	1.8	1.9	4.3	0.1	5.4
<b>Croatia</b>	22.0	24.2	15.6	12.8	5.0	1.6	3.3	0.8	0.4	7.7
<b>Turkey</b>	26.4	27.0	7.3	3.2	2.8	25.4	3.8	3.6	0.4	.

(1) Denmark, Ireland, France, Luxembourg, Malta and Romania are not included in the EU average; refer to the Internet metadata file ([http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_SDDS/en/trng\\_aes\\_esms.htm](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/trng_aes_esms.htm)).

Source: Eurostat (trng\_aes\_170)

Fig. 1 Providers of non-formal education and training activities, 2007

As for the organizational determinants, it depends on what strategy each organization adapts: to rely on internal labor market or on external market. If the company wants to enhance the employment relationship and the promote stability, then it will have to consider the improvement of “organizational performance though the process of increased career effectiveness of employees.”<sup>6</sup>

European Statistics show that the number of organizations willing to provide assistance in career management for their employees is very much increasing during the last ten years. In some countries the importance given is shown by the high number of companies that provide support for lifelong learning programs, assistance in choosing and developing the right career, personal brand development for their employees and so on.

As seen below in countries like United Kingdom, Latvia, Bulgaria and Sweden, the percentage of assistance given by the employers for training activities and other educational programs is very high.

The need for employers to keep upgrading and adapting their skills is one of the present themes. “The pace of change will be so rapid that people may have to acquire a new expertise every few years if they want to be part of the lucrative market for scarce talent. She<sup>7</sup> calls this process “serial mastery” and notes that the current educational system in most countries, from kindergarten through university, does a poor job of equipping people for continuous learning. There is likely to be a wave of innovation in further education, particularly online, that will cater to this need in a more flexible, personalised way than the traditional degree or postgraduate course. For some people, this evolution will take place within a single firm offering long-term employment. But for a growing number of workers the trick will be to jump from one company to another to take advantage of changing skill shortages.”<sup>8</sup>

Companies become more and more aware of the fact that a career support services for their employees will lead to improved organizational performance though the process of increased career effectiveness of employees.

Studies (Pazy, 1988, Oспен, 1994) have used the concept of individual career management in the context of the organization determining career effectiveness. Nevertheless, those studies showed that when integrating organizational and individual level determinants, the career management practices to all the organization were significantly related to all the four career effectiveness dimensions namely performance, attitude, identity and adaptability.

The supervisory support is a very important determinant for the career management and effectiveness of each employee and refers to multiple elements as supervising and providing feedback for the improving performance of the employee.

## **2.1. Important Information**

Manuscript is accepted for review with the understanding that no substantial portion of the paper has been published or is under consideration for publication elsewhere and that its submission for publication has been approved by all of the authors and by the institution where the work was carried out. It is further understood that any person cited as a source of personal communications has approved such citation. Articles and any other material published in the proceeding represent the opinions of the authors and should not be construed to reflect the opinions of the Editor(s) or the Publisher. Authors submitting a manuscript do so on the understanding that if the manuscript is accepted for publication, copyright for the article, including the right to reproduce the article in all forms and media, shall be assigned exclusively to the Publisher.

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<sup>7</sup> Gratton L., “*The Shift: The Future of Work is Already Here*”, 2011

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