

THE SUMMARY OF THE PHD DISSERTATION

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HR Business Partner in enterprises business practice in Poland

Key words: *HR Business Partner, Ulrich's model, personnel function effectiveness, HR department*

The doctoral dissertation refers to the HR Business Partner concept execution in large enterprises in Poland. The founder and the leading promoter of the HR Business Partner concept is D. Ulrich (1997). There were three main reasons for undertaking the topic analysis:

1. companies growing need to transform HR departments towards a business partnership, as a way to deal with turbulent environments challenges;
2. difficulties in effective implementation the HR Business Partner concept and achievement strategic position by HRBP, observed in Poland;
3. lack of empirical research and studies on the HR Business Partner concept in Polish conditions.

The **research problem** was formulated as follows: how is the idea of HRBP being interpreted in big companies in Poland? Is the way of executing HR Business Partner model consistent with the current D. Ulrich's concept? If so – to what extent? The Polish literature on the subject clearly lacks research that might answer the questions.

The **main goal** of the research was to systematize and present the theoretical framework of the HRBP concept and to verify the implementation of this concept in large enterprises in Poland.

The author has formulated the following research questions:

- Q1: How is the HR Business Partner concept implemented in large enterprises in Poland?
- Q2: To what extent are the HRBP models, running in practice, consistent with the current concept of D. Ulrich?
- Q3: What are the reasons for the convergence/discrepancy with the concept of D. Ulrich?

Research methodology

The methodology consisted of an analysis of literature and other sources (as podcasts, interviews, private correspondence with D. Ulrich) and empirical research. The employed research method was an in-depth, open interview, conducted on a group of HRBP specialists and HR managers from twenty companies.

Findings

The analysis of the literature indicated, that the relatively simple concept of "HR business partnership" has taken on all sorts of meanings. Due to literature studies and the exchange of private correspondence with D. Ulrich, the definition of the term "D. Ulrich's HRBP concept" has been clarified and updated. Due to the empirical material analysis, the position of the HR Business Partner in Poland has been described. Author defined trends and HRBP further development directions. In addition, author proposed recommendation on how to improve HR Business Partners effectiveness in Poland by: (1) identifying the factors determining HRBP's strategic position in the surveyed organizations; (2) developing a list of "effective HRBP" competencies; (3) showing the differences in the scope of "operational" and "strategic" HRBP's tasks (4) giving examples of successful HR Business Partners career paths.

Author described how the HRBP concept is executed in Poland, identifying both similarities and differences in the examined organizations. It turned out, that organizations identify the HRBP model establishment mainly with an HR architecture transformation (to "three legged stool" organization). Comparative analysis with the concept of D. Ulrich showed though, that companies don't fulfill conceptual model HRBP 2.0. fully. Identified reasons, contingent on organization, were as follows: lack of HR improvement activities; insufficient use of HR assessment tools; treating HRBP model only as an org-chart redesign; identifying the HRBP concept only with the HR Business Partner position, undervaluing other HR professionals and the entire HR department. Reasons, independent on organizations, included: complexity of the HRBP 2.0 model and its unpopularity, both in the scientific and business community.

The results and conclusions from the research, provided the basis for the presentation of original: "HRBP matrix". Author used the matrix to evaluate explored companies (1-20) and to indicate areas for improvement. Best organizations (called "champions") were those, which presented the highest both: development potential and the level of HRBP

model effectiveness (by the specified by author indicators). Particularly noteworthy is a group with an effective HRBP model, but with low development potential (called "risk-takers"). These companies, whilst effective today, may not be able to face future challenges.

The research results can inspire practitioners to rethink the solutions used and seek improvements in the process of creating value for stakeholders.