JUDGEMENT OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE INTEGRATION OF THE EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES OR REDUCED WORK CAPACITY INTO WORKPLACES IN THE NORTHERN GREAT PLAIN REGION

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Abstract: The Hungarian government tries to help the employment of people with disabilities or reduced work capacity by means of different devices but the key for the practical success of the legal regulations as well as the programs promoting the (re)integration reside in the attitude of the organizations’ leaders or the human resource professionals.

The problem of integrating the employees with disabilities or reduced work capacity into the world of work kindled my interest in 2006 when the Chances of Disabled People Foundation, on behalf of the Ministry of Employment and Labour, invited a tender which was won by the AVK Management and Labour Science Department of the University of Debrecen. In this way, the research program entitled “Equal Opportunities’ Human Resource Management (in Hungarian: EsélyEgyenlőségi Emberi Erőforrás Menedzsment, acronym of which is 4EM)” has come into existence and I was its main coordinator. In case of the human resource management, to my understanding, the equal opportunities mean that all citizens being capable of work should get opportunity being equal to their abilities and health conditions as well as their performances, results should be judged in the same way. Due to the rehabilitation contribution increased from 1 January 2010, more and more organizations would like to employ people with reduced work capacity but their insertion into the organization faces difficulties in many cases, in consequence of the inadequate information supply. The importance and continuation of the research are also justified by the fact that almost one million people with reduced work capacity and with disabilities live in Hungary whose active employment is insignificant. The activation of this labour force source is going to become a very important issue in the coming years, decades. Aim of the research program “Equal Opportunities’ Human Resource Management” is to reveal the tasks, features, procedures and methods for employing and managing people with disabilities or with reduced work capacity. Due to the imperfect knowledge, the employers are unaware the organizational features and opportunities of employing people with disabilities or reduced work capacity. In order to make the (re)integration of the persons with reduced work capacity into the labour market successful, we need to consider and know the opportunities, features of the persons concerned as well as demands of the employers in order to really provide equal chances to the people with disabilities or reduced work capacity in the workplace.

The group forming is extremely important from viewpoint of the people with reduced work capacity. One of the basic questions of (re)integration – like the healthy workers – how the employees with disabilities or reduced work capacity can be integrated into the organizational units. For them, the group means the direct corporate environment; the group’s approach, mentality, attitude determines the success or failure of integration. Due to the rules often comprehended as extortion and the rehabilitation contribution experienced as a quota, the organizations undertake to employ people with disabilities but there is no emphasis on their effective integration into the organization. This is not necessarily due to the fact that the organizations do not consider this task important but they do not know how to start. One opportunity of the helping the integration is to apply sensitizing trainings but a lot of leaders do not know this term as well as its significance in
integration of the people with disabilities

Beyond exposé of the factors influencing the adaptation of people with disabilities into a group, the article sheds light upon the nature, importance of sensitizing trainings as well.

Keywords: equal opportunities, HR, (re)integration, group, sensitizing trainings

JEL classification: M51, M54

1. Introduction
The program shortened as "4EM" presents a new aspect and mindset, the essence of which is that it approaches the (re)integration of people with disabilities or reduced work capacity from the employers' side. Within the framework of an independent research, we examine that what specific human resource management tasks or special managerial duties can arise in this area and what kind of factors can influence their successful implementation.

After role of the workplace adaptation, the study touches upon the peculiarities of the sensitizing trainings. The results of research show the data of 473 questionnaires which are evaluations by leaders, HR specialists and rehabilitation professionals being at different levels in 121 organizations operating in the Northern Great Plain region of Hungary, completed with experiences of in-depth interviews. The study concludes with deductions.

2. Specialized literature review of the integration into workplace
One of the basic functions of human resource management is the labour force supply. Most frequently, the literature means the practice, procedure of recruitment and selection by this field of activity but the issue of integration increasingly comes to the front in recent times (Gulyás, 2008). The integration is a frequent subject of the different HR professional meetings, professional websites where HR leaders of different organizations give advice as well as share their experiences with other colleagues (Móré, 2012a). In the long term, only committed, satisfied and loyal employees are able to ensure the perpetuance of an organization i.e. the interest of a firm is to employ committed and satisfied employees (Wiwczaroski, 2010). In order that the employees become satisfied and a corporation can keep them, the successful socialization and integration have a significant role (Csukonyi et al., 2007). A successful integration increases the efficiency and stability of an organization, contributes to the balanced social relations; the time spent on it will be refunded (Bácsné, 2010).

If a colleague feels that he/she does not get an adequate support for the integration then he/she can become uncertain and say goodbye to the workplace soon. In different organizations, the focus is often on the financial aspects (Nagymáté, 2012) and the career development only but it is at least such important that a new employee can get acquainted with the operating features and relation system of the organization (I1; Kozák, 2014). The workplace integration is an important stage of the occupational socialization. Here is decided the question of adequacy i.e. whether the job is suitable for the new entrant, whether he/she is able to acquire the requirements, whether the environment is appropriate and whether the entrant will be adopted by the organization, colleagues. If any of the listed factors does not prevail then the integration will be unsuccessful (Soós, 1997). Main goal of the adaptation is to integrate the new workers as soon as possible in order that they can become beneficial members of an organization. This brings benefits to both the employee and employer (I1). The interest of an employee is that the sooner he/she comprehends the operational features of organization, knows the organizational culture, understands the relating confines and expectations, the sooner he/she feels that he/she can operate routinely. The interest of an employer is that a new worker can find a place in
the organization and join in the process of production as soon as possible. Namely, only those workers can perform well who find their own place and feel their usefulness.

The organization of a corporation can also be increased if the managers better think over the work process in case of employing people with disabilities or reduced work capacity, for sake of the ability of integration; the managers should consider what they expect as a result from each field of work. Insofar as the integration procedure of a new employee is shorter then the reaching of the optimum performance level will occur sooner (Juhász – Vántus, 2007).

Based on Tardos (2013), the integration of people with reduced work capacity can be a more complex task in comparison with other employees entered newly. Therefore, a longer and more reasoned procedure should be elaborated. The trainings can appear as a part of the integration or a device for evolving the inclusive culture; the trainings can be for both the people with reduced work capacity and the workers of an organization. Elaboration of a mentoring system may also be required for following and helping the longer integration process.

Expansion of the mentoring system in the employment of people with reduced work capacity is evident with regard to both its functions and benefits. Based on Boda et al. (2006), the professional and problem-solving skills of the mentees develop, that’s why they perform better so the efficiency of organization is also on the increase through them. Furthermore, the mentor helps to form a cooperative relationship with the members of organization, to solve the occasional conflict situations.

In order to contribute to the integration, the colleagues shall be prepared for receiving the new entrant. If we are willing to employ a person with disabilities or reduced work capacity then we will often meet with resistance of the employees’ side which, on several occasions, is due to preconception or lack of information. The soon possible integration of people with disabilities or reduced work capacity into an organization may have a key role; one of its possible ways is to apply sensitizing trainings.

The integration of people with disabilities into a workplace is not a self-evident task. Based on Dávid et al. (2008), the fellow-workers should learn to and get to accept the otherness. The appearance in workplace generates rejection very rarely; the curiosity, aversion to the unknown and the abstention are more typical. In case of resolving the initial difficulties, the collective information, training provided for the colleagues can be an effective tool. In order that a new fellow-worker can perform the work with appropriate effectiveness and he/she can feel well in the organization, an accepting and supporting medium is required. Based on Móré (2012b), psychological trainings can contribute to a successful integration. These trainings tend towards the self-knowledge of an individual, help to defeat the psychological burden of integration. The different organization-developing trainings decrease the psychosocial stress of integration and increase the personal effectiveness: self-knowledge of an individual grows, he/she knows his/her personal resources, by means of which he/she will more effectively be able to communicate, to develop and enlarge his/her relations and to manage the conflicts during the work. (Antalovics, 2000; Wiwczaroski, 2011). Aim of the sensitizing trainings is (I2):

- to make the groups with reduced work capacity easily integrable into the proper work environment,
- to acquaint the leaders with those difficulties and situations which can occur during integration of employees with reduced work capacity,
- to make the colleagues easily able to accept the new employees to the group,
- to make the employees with reduced work capacity able to fit in a given field of work and a group.

So, the final aim of the sensitizing trainings is to develop and strengthen a receiving and accepting approach. The participants can experience the world of people with disabilities at close range and, through practical exercises, they can understand the everyday challenges
and the difficulties arising from special life situations (I3). The sensitization can perform by means of several methods: by means of cases, professional experiences, films, it is presented that the persons with disabilities are also capable of effective work and their employment can involve other organization-developing result beyond the economic benefit. Based on Bartos et. al (2009), several situational training tasks can be applied in which the fellow-workers can have first-hand experience about the exclusion, prejudices and there is possibility for applying tasks suiting to disability of a new entrant (speech incapacitation, hearing damage, vision damage), relating practices.

3. Material and method
The research "Equal Opportunities’ Human Resource Management (4EM)" was started in 2006 by the Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development of University of Debrecen, including the then called Department of Management and Labour Studies. It was started with regard to a tender won by support of the Chances of Disabled People Foundation, the project coordinator of which was me. Considering my personal vocation and the importance of the examined subject, I continued the research independently and without support after closing of the tender. I enlarged the original questionnaire and I also applied the method of in-depth interview and case study for detailed examination of the practice of equal opportunities’ human resource management. Such managers and HR professionals were taken into the examinations who have already experiences in this area i.e. the organizations represented by them employ people with disabilities and reduced work capacity.

After the appropriate screening and sorting, the results of this study show the data of 473 questionnaires which are evaluations by managers, HR and rehabilitation professionals being at different levels of 121 organizations operating in the Northern Great Plain region of Hungary. The organizations operate in 40 different settlements. The most, namely 229 pcs questionnaires of the sample have been filled in by leaders and employees of organizations in Hajdú-Bihar County; rate of the respondents working in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County is hardly lower, from where 227 pcs questionnaires have been sent back. Number of the questionnaires arrived from organizations of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county is only 17 pcs. Based on distribution of the organizations’ activity areas, it can be ascertained that managers of industrial or service-providing organizations have filled in almost 60% of the questionnaires (Figure 2.). Organizations operating in social or rehabilitation area give more than one fifth of the sample; their willingness to answer was positive. Furthermore, the respondents of state institutions are present in 8%.
In most cases, the examined organizations employ physically disabled employees since 337 respondents have marked this category on 473 questionnaires. Then, the examined organizations mainly employ people with reduced work capacity, hearing-impaired as well as visually impaired persons in spheres of work. 9 respondent organizations employ autistic employees. Based on the data, it can be stated that the respondents have experiences in relation to employment of workers belonging to every disability group so the results of research can be decisive in practice, regardless of that we are speaking about a non-representative sampling.

Junior managers have the highest rate in the sample (163 heads). These include the shift leaders, department managers, team leaders and the project managers. The other category shows the second highest rate (157 heads); this includes those who are in touch with the employees with reduced work capacity or disabilities but they do not work in managerial positions (e.g. assistants, clerk, and direct colleagues). 21% of the examined sample is composed by the chief leaders (executive director, site leader, president), then it followed by, with 38 heads, the group of rehabilitation professionals, mentors, personal and social helpers.

Almost one-third of the interviewees (151 heads) has experience between 1 and 5 years, 28% of them has experience between 6 and 10 years and only 36 heads marked that they have connection with persons with reduced work capacity for less than one year. According to the results, almost one-fifth of the respondent has already borne a relation to employees with disabilities or reduced work capacity for more than 10 years.

From 16 areas of the questionnaire interview, the study demonstrates the results of question about integration into a group; it is completed with details, relating to the integration, of the interviews with the examined organizations’ leaders.

3. Results and discussion

The groups as direct work community have even larger role, significance in employment of people with disabilities. For this kind of persons, the group means more to this kind of persons than to the healthy ones because, for them, it is equal to the possibility of belonging to a community, a meaningful work and meaningful life. For this reason, they are more committed loyal to the accepting groups (Berde, 2007). Acceptation of employees with disabilities acts as a community-forming power, strengthens the group cohesion, commitment and improves the attention and tolerance to each other.

The features of community forming within the corporation can be different in each organization. Leader of an organization of Debrecen told that the employees can work in different employment forms, groups according to their abilities, skills, state of health, educational level. For example, community workshops operate but there is possibility for telework, working in the developing – preparing workshop and for rehabilitation working which is the biggest part.

The idea mentioned above is strengthened by a leader of organization operating in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Beregszász County. During formation of the groups, this organization tries to alloy the requirements of work process with the conditions arising from nature of disability. They take care that the employees with weaker capacity will be supported by mentors who help and support their protégés from human and professional point of view. The composition of a group is the guarantee that the defencelessness feeling of employees with disabilities will be decreased and the pulling effect of the stronger will be enforced.

In case of a corporation of Hajdú-Bihar County, the employees work in groups. Each activity can be performed only by joint work of several people; the laundry tasks, cleaning in the buildings or even park-scaping are activities requiring more heads. In relation to
forming of groups, the interviewee told that they do not make a distinction between the people with reduced work capacity and the healthy workers. Its reason is that they do not want to make the person feel that he/she should be managed separately or other conditions apply to him/her just because he/she had damage to health for any reason. In case of the work group itself, they do not want to take the step for raising the person with reduced work capacity from the other because, in their opinion, it can easily lead to a group conflict, clashes of interests or performance differences.

The respondents have qualified the factors helping the integration into a group from 1 to 5 based on their efficiency and significance. The aggregated mean values are shown in Figure 2. The persons interviewed have scored numerous factors extremely high, the reason of which is probably that the integration of a person with reduced work capacity into a group has a high priority. Based on the results, it can be stated that the respondents have highlighted the role of two factors; these are the positive working atmosphere and the assistance in which the mentor and the colleagues play a large role. This is followed by the preparing for reception of the fellow-worker, the adequate information supply as well as organization of joint programs. However, the different trainings are decreasing the burden involved in the integration and increasing the personal effectiveness, in spite of this, the respondents has reckoned it as a less decisive factor but it does not mean that these ones cannot be effective in practice. A lot of managers do not know the term ‘sensitizing training’ as well as its content, purpose and importance in the integration of persons with disabilities so the managers dislike spending money on it. In spite of this, both the specialized literatures and other practical examples verify that the trainings help the staff to accept a colleague with disabilities sooner. In this way, the integration period can be shorter which may result in a positive effect in several areas, such as organization, satisfaction, work ethic, loyalty, performance, thus the amount spent on the trainings can be refunded multiply.

The enforcement of cooperation has obtained the lowest average rating which is not really typical in life of the organizations examined. This device is more riskier in case of the people with reduced work capacity since it can easily trigger off passivity from the involved people involved.

![Figure 3: The evaluation of the factors promoting adaptation to the group](image)
Based on results of the in-depth interviews, the practice of adaptation is different in case of the examined organizations. For example, at one of the organizations of Debrecen, in order to help the successful integration, each new employee is prepared for the work and the long-term employment by means of a system, education syllabus developed by the company. At the end of education, they check the efficiency of education and preparation by means of query and assessment. An employee does not start to work without keeping the education and its successful query.

According to the telling of a leader of an organization dealing with mediating workers with reduced work capacity and other services relating thereto, they were not “peculiarly” surprised when employees with disabilities arrived. This leader has highlighted that the preparation of the staff for the arrival is important, it needs patience of the colleagues, the communication is essential and the pace of work may change. It is important to establish a proper working environment, e.g. optimal placing of a visually impaired colleague’s computer, in order that there will be required light, and installation of reading programs. Numerous organization leaders have emphasized the mentors’ decisive role in integration of the people with disabilities. In case of an international consulting firm where autistics are also employed, before the chosen applicants start to work, mentors of the to-be employees have gone to the company and prepared the workers for the cooperation with autists during a few hours of conversation, in order to make the integration as successful as possible. Here, concrete questions could be asked and the mentors told what to pay attention to as well as what features the autistics have. In essence, not training but sensitizing occurred.

Leader of a multinational firm with premises in Debrecen has also highlighted the training mentor’s importance in the integration. In case of this firm, there was no particular problem with integration of the visually impaired employee. It happened as usual, the group members have been informed in advance about the arrival of a new employee and its time. The group members also need to know the work and tasks of a new employee. A preliminary training helps the employee to acquire the tasks, and then a mentor supports him/her during the work until he/she learns the skills required for the independent task performing. And the leader introduces the new entrant to everyone and shows him/her everything. Then the leader is beside the new entrant for about one day and also helps him/her to integrate later.

Part of the corporate culture of an organization in Nyírség is that each employee with disabilities was given a positive welcome. Those who already worked in other workplaces have positively experienced the “accepting” atmosphere of organization. They have received no discriminatory feedbacks from the group which accepted them. If the factory doctor deems an employee suitable then the studying period can begin. In each premise of the company, depending on the headcount, there are personal helpers who support the studying and the integration. The personal helper monitors the work process, presents as a supporter in the group and helps to find way in the information relating to the work. The employment happens with proviso of a 1-3-month term of probation, that much time is available for the integration and training. Based on the telling of leader, the employees have felt that, on the whole, their employment came up to their expectations since they were employed in jobs corresponding to their abilities. It is almost natural that their integration is faster than usual. One source of a good atmosphere is that everyone in the firm – including the management as well – is aware of the fact that the productivity of employees with disabilities is the same as the productivity of their healthy associates if they are allowed to work in jobs corresponding to their abilities. The corporation has got hold of valuable, dependable, loyal and motivated employees and the working atmosphere and work ethic are improved by their employment. The rapid integration of colleagues with
disabilities has a positive effect on the other workers’ work ethic, moreover commitment to the company. Their relation is characterized by the positive togetherness and not the “compassionate help”.

Conclusion and suggestions
According to the results of questionnaires, the following things play the largest role in the integration of persons with disabilities: the working environment and the assistance given by the mentors and colleagues. In case of the organizations examined by me, the application of trainings shows a comparatively low average value but it does not mean that these ones are not effective in practice. A lot of managers do not know the term ‘sensitizing training’ as well as its content, purpose and importance in the integration of persons with disabilities so the managers dislike spending money on it. In spite of this, both the specialized literatures and other practical examples verify that the trainings help the staff to accept a colleague with disabilities sooner. In this way, the integration period can be shorter which may result in a positive effect in several areas, such as organization, satisfaction, work ethic, loyalty, performance, thus the amount spent on the trainings can be refunded multiply.

In order to contribute to the integration of persons with disabilities into the labour market, the Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities Non-profit Ltd. has started an accredited training named “Training of Mentors, Consultants, Trainers and Leaders for Equal Opportunities of Disability” (in Hungarian: Fogyatékosügyi esélyegyenlőségi mentor, tanácsadó, tréner és vezetőképzés, the acronym of which is FEMTT-V); I took part in it as a developer and an instructor. Within the framework of a multiplier instructor training, I also took part in a sensitizing training where, by a dual trainer leading and in an integrated manner (one of the psychologists was visually impaired), we was able to experience the feeling of the prejudiced exclusion and to know the different disability groups’ features and their compliance with a job. Currently, several training and consulting firms advertise sensitizing trainings, after which the staff will be able to receive the disadvantageous colleagues in such way that the company can profit by its application both financially and humanly (I4). The ones taking part in a sensitizing training will be able to acquire a helping attitude, to recognize their own barriers and limits, the way of tactful but unambiguous communication, to sense their own roles precisely, to manage the games formed and to improve their conflict-solving skills (I5). They will be able to cooperate more effectively, to decrease their antipathies arising from diversity, to understand that the problems are also challenges simultaneously which they can learn from.

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