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## PRESENT STATE OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ORGANISATIONS OPERATING IN SLOVAKIA \*

**Abstract.** Continuous performance evaluation is necessary to be considered as an integral part of continuous management process. It enables updating of working objectives and plans, continuous development of skills and overall competence of employees and possible solution of performance problems. Final examination and evaluation of performance provides for creation of the overall picture of performance up to now as a basis for elaboration of future plans. Except for employee development itself, evaluation can have a positive impact on whole human resources management system, which should eventually be seen in whole organisation efficiency increase. With regard to significance and necessity of the existence of performance evaluation system in 84 organisations, results of our 2012 research sound negative. The extent to which organisations deal with employee evaluation was found out within researches focused on identification of present state of human resources management in public administration organisations operating in Slovakia.

**Key words:** human resources management; interviewed organisations; working performance evaluation; development; performance.

**JEL Classification:** E24, J24, O15

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### СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ ОЦЕНКИ ТРУДА ГОССТРУЖАЩИХ В СЛОВАКИИ

**Аннотация.** Интегральной частью процесса менеджмента является непрерывная аттестация госслужащих. Она позволяет обновлять рабочие цели и планы, постоянно совершенствовать навыки и общую компетентность служащих, а также предоставляет возможные решения проблем трудовой деятельности. Анализ финальных результатов аттестации государственных служащих позволяет сформировать целостную картину исполнительской эффективности за определенный период времени и составляет основу для разработки перспективных планов. Кроме поддержки в профессиональном развитии самого работника, служебная аттестация может оказывать положительное влияние на систему управления человеческими ресурсами в целом, что повышает целостность и эффективность организации. В 2012 году мы провели интервьюирование служащих 84 государственных организаций и выявили степень использования результатов служебной аттестации в Словакии в системе управления человеческими ресурсами. Принимая во внимание важность и необходимость проведения служебной аттестации в организации, наше исследование было сфокусировано на идентификации современного состояния подобной системы оценки в Словакии. Результаты оказались неудовлетворительными.

**Ключевые слова:** управление человеческими ресурсами, организации-респонденты, оценка эффективности труда, развитие, продуктивность труда.

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### СУЧАСНИЙ СТАН ОЦІНКИ ПРАЦІ ДЕРЖСЛУЖБОВЦІВ У СЛОВАЧЧИНІ

**Анотація.** Інтегральною складовою процесу менеджменту є аттестация держслужбовців. Вона дозволяє оновлювати робочі цілі та плани, постійно вдосконалювати навички і загальну компетентність службовців, а також надає можливі розв'язку проблем трудової діяльності. Аналіз фінальних результатів аттестации державних службовців дозволяє сформувати цілісну картину виконавської ефективності за визначений період часу й складає основу для розробки перспективних планів. Крім підтримки у професійному розвитку власне працівника, службова аттестация може впливати на систему управління людськими ресурсами у цілому, що підвищує цілісність і ефективність організації. У 2012 році ми провели інтерв'ювання службовців 84 державних організацій та виявили ступінь використання результатів службової аттестации у Словаччині в системі управління людськими ресурсами. Беручи до уваги важливість і необхідність службової аттестации в організації, наше дослідження було сфокусовано на ідентифікації сучасного стану такої системи оцінки у Словаччині. Результати виявилися незадовільними.

**Ключові слова:** управління людськими ресурсами, організації-респонденти, оцінка ефективності праці, розвиток, продуктивність праці.

**Introduction.** Main objective of working performance evaluation is to find out maximum utilisation of skills, knowledge and interest of each employee (Arthur, 2010). Working performance evaluation represents a crucial personnel activity focused on finding out how employees perform their job, how they fulfil

tasks and requirements of their working position, what their working behaviour is, and what their relationships are with co-workers, customers and other persons they are in contact with in relation to their work (Koubek, 2010). Employee evaluation reflects also how a superior employee is able to work with people and how they are subsequently able to use knowledge obtained within evaluation to reach strategic objectives (Stachq, 2012). Evaluation should also comprise communication, most often between direct superior and evaluated employee, focused on evaluation of information obtained upon evaluation (Sedlak,

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2008). It should involve accentuation of positive features of working performance and social behaviour of employee, and reference to found insufficiencies. The given implies that appropriate evaluation should provide an opportunity to clarify facts about evaluated and evaluator with regard to the fact that each of them can have different perception and thus also standards in evaluation of individual activities (Wagnerová 2005). This way may prevent occurrence of misunderstandings and ambiguities within decisions of superior employee and their correct understanding and carrying out by subordinate employees (Livian and Prazská 1997). However, it is essential that employee evaluation does not stick only to stating of working performance positive and negative features (Stachová and Stachá 2012). Regarding found positive features, it is necessary to motivate employee to continue with the given behaviour, and regarding found insufficiencies, it is necessary to ensure employee support in their elimination. The most appropriate form of support is usually to provide employee an opportunity to educate (Urbanová 2012). Further education opportunity provision is also suitable as a form of motivation, since this is how organisation shows employees that they are so valuable for it that it is willing to invest financial means in them, which subsequently implies that it counts on them also for the future, whether at currently occupied position or at a higher position after higher education completion (Stachová 2013).

The given characteristic of employee working performance evaluation directly implies significance of evaluation impact on education, remuneration and carrier management of employees. That is why we focused, within our research, on the analysis of current status of employee evaluation in public administration organisations operating in Slovakia. Results obtained in the research are provided in this contribution.

Material and Methods Used in the Research. Objective of the article is to present results of the research executed in the period from February 2012 to May 2012, aimed predominantly at finding out whether and how human resources management is currently implemented in public administration organisations operating in Slovakia. Regarding extent of the given issue, the research was divided into ten partial objectives, while one of them was to identify whether organisations deal with employee evaluation and whether its results are subsequently used upon remuneration, education and carrier development.

Set of respondents comprised 84 organisations operating in Slovakia, while the main condition posed on the organisation was the size of at least 50 employees.

Within research focused on finding out whether public administration organisations deal with employee evaluation, we were particularly interested in whether they had established a formal system of employee evaluation, whose opinion is required upon obtaining information within formal evaluation system and which methods of working performance evaluation are preferred in organisations. All information was dealt with in relation to individual employee categories, i.e. management, specialists, administrative employees and manual workers. We were subsequently interested in whether employees were familiarised with evaluation results and whether they had an opportunity to comment on them. Last but not least, we also focused on spheres in which organisations use information obtained through employee working performance evaluation.

Systemic approach was applied for the research processing, and obtained information was processed through methods of induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis and generalisation. Questionnaire survey was used to analyse current state of focus of organisations operating in Slovakia on employee working performance evaluation, and statistical methods were used upon its processing. Most values were expressed as percentage upon results summarisation. Comparison method was used upon current state evaluation, comparing organisations dealing with employee evaluation to those who do not deal with this function of human resources management.

Analysis and Evaluation of Research Results. Objective of employee evaluation is working performance permanent

enhancement based on whole human resources management system improvement through better knowledge of evaluated employees, their tasks and activities (Kachanaková et al., 2011). In this respect, within our research, we were predominantly interested in whether interviewed organisations deal with employee working performance evaluation, i.e. whether they had established a formal system of evaluation. 72% of organisations answered the given question positively. Compared to a research of the same character, also conducted at School of Economics and Management in Public Administration in Bratislava, for the same purpose and involving a similar respondent sample, a positive trend can be stated, since the number of organisations has increased by 8% (Table 1). However, we do not consider even this state to be ideal with regard to the importance of evaluation function.

Table 1  
Percentage of organisations with established formal system of evaluation (years 2011, 2012)

Have you established a formal system of evaluation?	% of organisations in 2011	% of organisations in 2012
Positively answering organisations in %	64	72

Source: Author

With regard to the given fact, the following part of this article will analyse only organisations declaring that they deal with evaluation of their employees actively. To find out whether evaluation system is focused on all employees or only selected ones, we posed the following question: «Do you have a formal employee evaluation system for the following employee categories?» Answers of organisations are shown in Table 2.

Table 2  
Answers to question: «Do you have a formal employee evaluation system for the following employee categories?»

Do you have formal evaluation system for:	% of organisations in 2012
Managers	72
Specialists	59
Administrative employees	65
Manual workers	62

Source: Author

Answers of interviewed organisations implied that employee evaluation is conducted for the management position in the greatest extent. More than 50 % of interviewed organisations stated that they had established employee evaluation system for all categories. With regard to information on who is evaluated, we were also interested in who evaluates. Theory and practice usually coincide that the most competent person to evaluate employees are their direct superiors. They should also conduct final evaluation of all supporting materials for evaluation, whether they had been compiled by themselves or submitted by anyone else. They should also lead final interview and propose measures resulting from evaluation (Koubek, 2004). However, employee evaluation can be conducted also by other persons from the given organisation or external ones, for instance senior superiors, subordinates, colleagues at the same working position or customers. Self evaluation or assessment centre have been broadly used recently. Each of the given evaluation forms has advantages as well as disadvantages and they cannot be used for all working positions equally. It is up to organisation which evaluation form it chooses, however its objective should be the greatest possible objectivity of evaluation results (Bístaková 2009). Three-hundred-and-sixty-degree feedback is considered to be the most comprehensive evaluation form, within which employee is evaluated by a broad scale of criteria and evaluators. Within our research in organisations operating in Slovakia, we were also finding out whose opinion is required to obtain information upon working performance evaluation. Answers to this question are shown in Table 3.

The given implies that direct superiors are used to evaluate employees in the greatest extent, in all employee categories.

Table 3

Answers to question: «If you have a formal evaluation system, whose opinion is required to obtain information within employee evaluation?»

Whose opinion is required upon evaluation of:	Managers	Specialists	Administrative employees	Manual workers
Direct superior	57	69	67	64
Senior superior	27	22	17	12
Employees themselves	18	19	17	12
Subordinates	6	4	2	2
Colleagues	5	7	6	6
Customers	5	8	4	5

Source: Author

Senior superiors are used in a significantly smaller extent, or self evaluation is conducted. Only 2% of organisations stated that they conduct evaluation through three-hundred-and-sixty-degree feedback.

Within the research, we were also interested in which evaluation methods are most often used to evaluate working performance in individual employee categories. Results are shown in Table 4.

greatest extent, in 71%, within employee remuneration. In a significantly smaller extent, in 32%, they are used within carrier growth planning; they are used within employee education and development planning in 27%; and they are used in a smaller extent, only in 22%, within personnel planning.

**Conclusions.** Evaluation of employees' job performance is considered to be an important basis for current modern

organisation to improve its functioning. Based on evaluation of actual work potential that organisation manages, and point of view of stipulated objectives, knowledge, skills, attitudes, value orientation, creativity, motivation, cooperativeness and further characteristics of each employee can be developed programmatically. Working performance evaluation represents a process in which organisation evaluates performance as well as competence and working behaviour of employees (Caganova et al., 2010). If this evaluation is well-prepared and conducted its results can mean impact for individual employees, managers and whole organisation. Due to this reason, fact that public administration organisations operating in Slovakia dealing with evaluation system do not try to obtain as comprehensive view of employees as possible (through obtaining information from all people who get in contact with the given employees, and from employees themselves through 360-degree feedback)

upon obtaining information, but usually obtain this information only from direct superiors sounds quite negative. Although it is a direct superior who is generally considered to be the most competent person, since they know situation at the workplace of evaluated employee best, they can provide them also with partial, informal feedback regarding achieved working performance and it is them who is supposed to set up objectives for the following periods in cooperation with the employee. However, it is not possible to consider such one-side obtaining of information upon employee performance evaluation as sufficient. Analysis of using individual evaluation methods of employee working performance showed that so called traditional evaluation methods, i.e. evaluation based on performance and evaluation based on norms (standards) fulfilment, are most often used. We can evaluate positively that methods like evaluation scales, evaluation interview and self evaluation have gradually started to be used also in organisations operating in Slovakia. Obtained information implies that working performance of organisational management is most often evaluated, and individual methods are used in the greatest percentage

Table 5

Answers to question: «Do your employees have a possibility to comment on the results of working performance evaluation?»

Do your employees have a possibility to comment on the results of working performance evaluation?	Positively answering organisations in %
Yes - they are perfectly familiarised with evaluation results and have a possibility to comment on them	37
No - evaluation results are only for evaluators	16
Evaluation results are communicated to employees but they have no possibility to comment on them subsequently	19
We do not conduct working performance evaluation	28

Source: Author

The given implies that evaluation based on objectives fulfilment is used in the greatest extent, in 40–52%, to evaluate management, specialists and administrative employees; evaluation interview follows, in 29–35%. Evaluation scales are quite often used, in 25–30 %; evaluation based on norms fulfilment is used in 21–26% and self evaluation in 15–20%. To evaluate manual workers, evaluation based on norms (standards) fulfilment is most often used, in 41%; followed by evaluation based on objectives fulfilment and evaluation scales, used in 32%. Other methods are used in a significantly smaller frequency.

With regard to the fact that evaluation is performed for the purpose of achieving permanent enhancement of working performance based on continuous development of skills and overall competence of employees, as well as their appropriate working behaviour, it is essential not to perceive it as something unwanted. It is therefore important to discuss its consequences with evaluated employees and, on their basis, to set up individual objectives for employees. For this purpose, assessment of evaluation should follow necessarily after evaluation conduction, and evaluated employee should unconditionally participate in it, since they have a right to be familiarised with obtained results as well as they should have room for comments. Within our research, we were also finding out whether employees of analysed organisations have such a possibility. Answers to this question imply (Table 5) that 37% of interviewed organisations stated that employees have a possibility to comment on the results of working performance evaluation. 16% of organisations stated that their employees have no possibility to comment on these re-

*Table 6*

**Answers to question: «In which of the following spheres is information obtained through employee evaluation used?»**

<b>In which of the following spheres is information obtained through employee evaluation used?</b>	<b>Positively answering organisations in %</b>
Remuneration	71
Education and development	27
Carrier growth	32
Personnel planning	22

Source: Author

upon its evaluation, although even these values cannot be considered as sufficient with regard to modern human resources management.

One of the fundamental evaluation principles is a need to familiarise evaluated employee with evaluation results and to provide them room for comments regarding their view of evaluation. Based on this, discussion should be lead between evaluated person and their direct superior about found state and subsequent improvement of the found state. Due to this reason, finding that in more than 63% of interviewed organisations, employees do not have a possibility to comment on the results of working performance evaluation, and 16% of them is not even familiarised with this evaluation sounds negative. It is therefore impossible to fulfil evaluation objectives in these cases, implying that up to 63% of interviewed organisations do not conduct effective evaluation of their employees; respectively they do not have an evaluation system at all.

With regard to significantly negative finding resulting from answers to the fifth question, we attach statement that working performance evaluation works too often only as a kind of bureaucratic system where personal unit has the main role rather than line managers. It focuses predominantly on the past and on what was wrong, not on looking forwards and dealing with future needs of employee development. Employee evaluation is applied individually in most cases, and it is only a little interconnected with organisational needs. Line managers often refuse it as something requiring much time and not having a significant meaning. Employees are irritated by shallowness with which managers often conduct it, lacking necessary skills

or only wanting to fulfil the task without problems. This reflects justification of the given research in practice, since organisational managements have a possibility to compare current evaluation system of working performance to state that interviewed organisations declared, and to consider possibilities of its enhancement on this basis.

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