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Abstract

This paper focuses on the innovative practices of personnel recruitment in international organizations in the region of Thessaloniki in Central Macedonia to point out alternative recruitment tools and practices that could be used in the Greek public sector.

The aim is to transform the current recruitment process used in the Greek public sector by adopting practices utilized by reputable and successful international firms that have the know how already.

Key words: Innovative Practices, Recruitment, International Organization, Greek Public Sector.

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Table of Contents

DECLARATION	3
ABSTRACT	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	5
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	8
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 HUMAN RESOURCES DEFINITION	11
2.2 HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT.....	13
2.3 UNIQUENESS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM)	14
2.4 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES	14
2.5 PLANNING BEFORE SELECTION	15
2.6 SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT STAGES	16
2.6.1 <i>Identifying the vacancy & Job analysis</i>	16
2.6.2 <i>Internal Recruitment</i>	18
2.6.3 <i>External Recruitment</i>	20
CHAPTER 3:	21
RECRUITMENT TOOLS.....	21
3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS (EMPLOYEE REFERRALS)	21
3.2 ORGANIZATION’S WEBSITE, SOCIAL NETWORKS & COLLEGE RECRUITING	21
3.3 HUMAN RESOURCES SELECTION	22
3.3.1 <i>Application</i>	23
3.3.2 <i>Screening Interview</i>	23
3.3.3 <i>Interviewing Candidates</i>	23
3.4 RECRUITMENT TOOLS CONCLUSION	28
CHAPTER 4:	30
UNITED NATIONS OVERVIEW	30
4.1.1 <i>Staff Selection Process</i>	32
4.2 ATTRACTING THE RIGHT APPLICANTS.....	34
4.3 THE EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	35
4.4 EFFICIENCY AND COST OF UN RECRUITMENT	35
4.5 MERITOCRACY AND DIVERSITY IN UN RECRUITMENT	35
4.6 RECRUITMENT IN UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW	36
CHAPTER 5:	38
REFORMING THE TRADITIONAL METHODS OF SELECTION AND ATTEMPTING TO USE MORE INNOVATIVE PRACTICES OF RECRUITMENT BY THE GREEK PUBLIC SECTOR.....	38
5.1 GAMIFICATION	39
5.1.1 <i>Reveal the Game by L’Oreal</i>	40
5.2 ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA RECRUITMENT	41
5.3 STAR METHOD	43
5.4 PSYCHOMETRIC & ABILITY TESTS	43
5.5 BOOTCAMPS.....	44
CHAPTER 6: THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIOPOLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF GREECE	45
6.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	45
6.2 LABOR LAW AND REGULATIONS.....	46

6.5 GREEK PUBLIC SECTOR RECRUITMENT SYSTEM ANALYSIS	51
6.6 STATUTE FRAMEWORK	53
6.7 THE CASE OF GERMANY.....	54
6.8 THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SELECTION PROCESS AND CORRUPTION IN THE GREEK PUBLIC SECTOR	55
CHAPTER 7:.....	58
METHODOLOGY / QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	58
7.4 TRANSFERABILITY	68
CONCLUSION	72
APPENDIX.....	74
REFERENCES.....	76

Chapter 1: Introduction

In a constantly changing and evolving global and organizational context/environment, it is deemed necessary for organizations to recruit the best talent to keep their competitive advantage and continue to be profitable. Hence, a well-functioning Human Resources Department can provide organizations with the capability to meet their needs and utilize the most valuable resources. One of the most challenging aspects of Human Resources Management is the personnel recruitment. The process of searching, selecting, and recruiting talented people belongs at the heart of every organization; an organization without its human capital is nothing. However, recruitment practices can vary from organization to organization. Depending on the organization and whether it belongs to the public or private sector, the recruitment process changes/can differ accordingly. There are two main categories of civil service organization in the public sector: the career-based system and the position-based system. The career-based system is traditionally “a closed system which emphasizes on strict scrutiny of candidates’ ability to enter the public sector” (Rammata, 2018). In this system, emphasis is placed on staff training and the ability to be promoted based on certain criteria. This type of system fits the formalistic Greek public administration. On the other hand, in a position-based system, the most suitable candidate is hired to fill the position based on personality traits, academic and work experience. Even though the career-based system has been in place in the Greek public sector for many decades, a hybrid model is lately being used in which administrative effectiveness and professional development are offered (Ραμματά, 2018). Nonetheless, HR plays a vital role in the effectiveness and efficiency of the public and private sectors. As Rammata (2011) supports the quality of the services can be positively be influenced by the appropriate management and development of the HR processes

Today’s economic, social, political, and technological demands for growth and need for improvements of the Greek public sector have put pressure on the government. According to the constitution of Greece, “Civil servants shall be the executors of the will of the State and shall serve the people, owing allegiance to the Constitution and devotion to the Fatherland” (Article 103,1). The State itself is obliged and responsible for its citizens and laws according to the constitution. The purpose of the interest of today’s democracies makes the modern civil servants to become the backbone of public administration envisioning the optimization of processes of common interest. (Ραμματά, 2011). The biggest and longest, if I may say, problem that has been ignored by the Greek

public administration is the dysfunctional recruitment system. For many decades, the Greek recruitment system has faced enormous problems such as corruption, nepotism and lack of meritocracy, due to the nature of the state (Kondylis, 2011). Around the decade of 2000, in order to address the problematic nature of the system and take actions towards a better and efficient system, a very political oriented or rather meritocratic recruitment system was established, which was based on formal qualifications and recruitment competitions. Even though, this system managed to reduce the patronage character and involvement to some extent, the system led to inefficient methods where candidates were not the most capable but were appointed due to higher credit points with no actual competences relevant to the position. This one-dimensional system and the additional problems that arose made it clear to decision makers that more efforts for improvement are needed (Lymperopoulou, 2016).

If we had to acknowledge this pathogen, the catalyst factors that enabled the problem to arise are the high complexity, along with lack of organizational planning, and indeterminate human resources management (Lymperopoulou,2016). According to Papalexandri and Bourantas (2003) the deviancies of the Greek public administration are related to the issue of recruitment systems in terms of the inability of valid planning of jobs, segmentation and strategic personnel management which included elements of personnel selection based on political criteria. Despite some improvements, certain deficiencies that are rooted in the past still exist. The goal of this study is to contribute to the strengthening of the recruitment systems in Greece by following the best practices of international organizations.

With that being said, in order to provide insights and truly understand how the Greek public sector could be improved, innovative practices of international organizations have been studied thoroughly, and a qualitative analysis was conducted. The analysis included semi-structured interviews with 7 HR managers and 2 Senior Hiring Managers responsible for hiring employees of international firms in the wider area of Thessaloniki. More specifically, the firms are involved in various industries such as Pharmaceutical, Consulting, Auditing, Risk Advisory, Transportation & E-commerce, Information Technology and Manufacturer of optical components. The qualitative research methodology, which has been followed, was based on articles, reports, and cases that focused on recruitment processes and practices in international organizations, firms, and the Greek public sector, along with the data derived from the interviews.

The same interview questions have been asked to every firm and were based on the general process and philosophy behind the recruitment process that each firm uses, examining which methods are currently being used and which new trends in HR are being used. Additionally, a set of questions focused on the effect of the financial crisis, the employee development and the use of internships have been asked to the professionals. The aim of those questions was to deep dive on how firms handled the financial crisis and in what extend their hiring budget decreased. Moreover, regarding the selection process that each organization uses, the questions focused on the types of interviews that are followed, and what kind of professional development paths are used. Taking everything into consideration this study attempts to dive into the roots of the pathogen and propose solutions such as best practices to improve the current recruitment system in the Greek public sector.

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 refers to the introduction, the statement of the problem, the purpose and the contribution on further research and problem solving. Chapter 2 is dived into the theory around Human Resources evolution, challenges, and uniqueness while Chapter 3 introduces Human Resources tools that are being widely used for public or private sector. After this analysis, Chapter 4 focuses on international recruitment of intergovernmental organizations and international firms while Chapter 5 introduces innovative practices of recruitment. Chapter 6 introduces the current economic development, labor law and regulations and analyses the traditional method of Greek public sector. Finally, in Chapter 7 focuses on the data analysis of the interviews, the discussion of findings and transferability of selection practices to the Greek public sector.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Human Resources Definition

Human Resources Management (HRM) both in theory and practice is a multidisciplinary field which brings together various disciplines that study the management of work and people. One of the first HRM definition was given by Michael Beer and colleagues that suggested: “Human Resources Management involves all management decisions and actions that affect the nature of the relationship between an organization and employees – its human resources” (Beer, 1984, p.1). This definition, though, was limited since it only focused on managerial activity and how, of course, it affects the employment relationship. Later, Storey presented his idea that HRM is not limited but also pays great attention to the strategic dimension and employee commitment to the organization. More specifically, Storey noted “Human resource management is a distinctive approach to employment management, which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic employment of a highly committed and capable workforce using an array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques” (Storey, 2007, p.7). Despite the above-mentioned definitions, there are also many other researchers that have not managed to totally capture the essence of what HRM is all about until today. In other words, it is needed a term -definition- of HRM that captures and contains people’s management and simultaneously represents the current-capitalistic society associated with ideologies, challenges, and global structures. Hence, a modern HRM is defined by Bratton and Gold as: “a strategic approach to managing employment relations which emphasize that leveraging people’s capabilities and commitment is critical to achieving sustainable competitive advantage or superior public services”. This is accomplished through distinctive set of integrated employment policies, programmes and practices, embedded in an organizational and societal context” (Bratton, Gold, 2017 p.7). Furthermore, Bratton and Gold mention in their book Schultz ‘s definition about human capital. They suggested in 1993 that human capital is defined as specific procedures and incentives that belong to the organization and enable its employees to get trained, develop their knowledge, abilities, skills through educational course having as a result their personal growth but also satisfy-contribute to achieving the goals of the company.

If we were to make an analogy, human capital is the cornerstone of an organization. In other words, it is the first stone set of an organization that determines the entire direction, structure, and success. Therefore, employees are simply assets of every organization whose efforts and

commitment increase the organizations' profits, competitive advantage in the market and productivity. Living in 2022 and due to ongoing changes in the market, organizations are forced to use innovations, such as: up to date technology, business plans and a well-trained human capital to fight and survive competition.

Human resource management at its core is concerned with recruitment, selection, training, administration, performance, record keeping, learning and development and employee relations. There are certain activities that concern the HRM: transactional, traditional, and transformational (Wright, McMahan, Snell, 1998). Transactional activities consist of the administrative tasks, like record keeping and everyday transactions for instance changes in employee records, status changes and payroll information. On the other hand, traditional activities deal with the standard procedures such as planning, recruiting, selection, training, and performance evaluation. Transformational activities are the activities that add value to the organization's purpose, for example innovation, cultural or organizational change and strategic value.

<i>Role of HRM</i>	
<i>Early 20th Century</i>	<i>21st Century</i>
Caretaker	Strategic partner
Employee focus Records	Cost-effectiveness Employee development




Figure 1.0: Human Resource Management Evolution, Source: Wright, McMahan, Snell & Gehart (1998)

According to the table above, it can be concluded that Human Resource Management (HRM), evolved significantly within one century. The role of HRM in the 20th century was that of the caretaker in the organization, with a focus on employee records, whether that meant payroll or organizational changes, also known as “Traditional Human Resource Management”. One century later, the traditional character has been replaced by a transactional one. As the time passed, it evolved so that HR functions would align with the goals and gained a more strategic oriented role. In other words, the focus shifted from record keeping to employee development, best practices, training, engagement activities, strong culture, and employee satisfaction.

The push for change came along with the advancement of technology. As technology information developed, it was almost inevitable for HRM not to evolve. The activities mentioned above, from transactional and traditional, changed to transformational ones, which, despite their

complexity, added strategic value to organizations (Thite, Kavanagh, & Johnson, 2012). During the 1990s, organizations started incorporating technology to reduce some costs and manage the overall budget. No matter the size of the organizations, computer-based HR systems were present. The overall goal of this change was not the reduction of human capital but rather to become part of the new modern world, which would engage employees in transformational activities and strengthen the value of the organization. As for today, because of globalization and increased competition, businesses have increased the use of technology, and personnel training to add more value to their organizations.

2.2 Human Resources Department

The Human Resources Department is the core of every organization; it ensures that the organization is filled with the right number of competent employees at the right time and right place who will perform tasks and contribute to the long-term success of the organization. According to Boxall and Purcell (2003), Human Resource Management was defined as “The management of work and people in organizations”. On a later stage, they provided a second definition: “an inevitable process that accompanies the growth of organizations. Some functions of today’s HR are the following: human resource planning, recruitment and selection, job analysis design, orientation and induction, training and development, transfer, promotion, termination, compensation and remuneration, motivation, health, safety, industrial relation, employee retention (Hashim, Hameed, 2012).

The functions of HR must align with the HRM goals. If they do not, it is very hard for an organization to sustain itself. David Guest defined the following HRM goals: flexibility, commitment, quality, and strategic integration. More in depth, an organization must be flexible to adapt to changes and manage innovation, commit to pursuing agreed goals, provide quality goods and services, including the quality of its employees. Equally important is for an organization to integrate HRM issues into its strategic plans (Guest, 1991). Nowadays, employees are not viewed as a commodity but rather as human resources that set overall strategies and goals, design work systems and through their work continuously contribute to the organization’s profits. Employees share their traits such as intelligence, commitment, knowledge, skills, experience, judgement in the workplace. However, HRM is not one size fits all; many HRM models and practices exist within different organizations – this is the notion of HRM diversity. It has been noted that “HRM goals

vary according to competitive choice, technologies, characteristics of employees and the state of labor market” (Armstrong as cited in Dyer, Holder, 1998). In other words, HRM is a multidisciplinary field and has many variants across business units, firms, industries, organizational levels, and societies.

2.3 Uniqueness of Human Resource Management (HRM)

What makes HRM different from conventional personnel management (i.e., the administrative function that aims to maintain fair conditions of employment) is that HRM has several distinctive characteristics. For example, it has been noted that HRM is a strategic approach because it emphasizes the importance of integrating HRM strategy and practice with corporate strategy (Guest, 1989), that the focus of responsibility for people management is devolved to line managers, and that the role of personnel or human resource specialists is to support and facilitate line management in this task, rather than to control it (Armstrong, 2009). Furthermore Beer et al. (1984) concluded that HRM has two key features: 1. HR is responsible for the creation and setting policies that govern how HR activities must develop, unfold, and implemented in ways that make them mutually reinforcing and 2. Line managers are responsible for the alignment of HR polices and competitive strategy (Armstrong, 2009). In addition, cited by Armstrong, Legge gave the following explanation of HRM philosophy: “That human resource policies should be integrated with strategic business planning and used to reinforce an appropriate (or change an inappropriate) organizational culture, that human resources are valuable and a source of competitive advantage, that they may be tapped most effectively by mutually” (Legge, 1989).

2.4 Human Resources Management Challenges

It is without doubt, that humans play a critical part in any organization. In other words, they are the organization; nevertheless, the world is evolving continuously, and as a result of the rapid changes in business, taking into account globalization, consumer needs and habits as well as new technology, HR professionals face new problems. The integration of markets demands HR professionals to push for diversity and ensure competitive advantage in the global environment.

According to the World Federation of Personnel Management Association (2009) the top ten challenges that HR faces are: organizational effectiveness, change management, leadership

development, health, safety, compensation, staff retention, learning and development, succession planning and skill labor. Based on other researchers' viewpoint HR faces challenges in "technology, E-commerce, globalization, work force diversity, ethical consideration which may directly or indirectly affect recruitment, competitive advantages, training and development and job performance" (Decenzo, Robbins, 2001). Unquestionably, one of the most challenging aspects is the recruitment and selection of personnel, because an organization cannot be successful without the proper profile of people.

Selecting the right people is vital for any organization's effectiveness and performance. On the one hand, it is necessary to cover the business's needs, but at the same time, organizations do not favor overstaffing. Overstaffing can be harmful to the organization's budget and can cause resentment. One thing is certain: HRM has evolved from what it was two to three decades ago. While it is still concerned with how people are employed and managed within the organization, HRM confronts significant difficulties that HR professionals must acknowledge and comprehend.

2.5 Planning Before Selection

The goal of HRM is to ensure that the organization achieves success through its people. As it was described by Boxall and Purcell (2013), HRM is defined as "an inevitable process that accompanies the growth of organizations" and covers the following activities: human capital management, knowledge management, organization design and development, workforce planning, recruitment, selection, performance management, learning and development, policies, employee relations and employee well-being. It is a process that exists in every organization and adds a strategic element to organizations since it includes data, business plans, and statistics concerning human resources (Mondy & Martocchio, 2016).

Planning is a complex rather than a simple process and is used by organizations. Rothwell and Sredl (2000) noted that HR planning is an integration of HR processes which synchronize all HR activities: hiring, promotion, training, and recruitment. It is very important for the HR department to forecast the hiring needs and examine if additional personnel are deemed necessary. For instance, the optimal solution may be to examine "other alternative to recruiting such as contingent labor or overtime of already existing employees instead of hiring new ones" (Gusdorf, 2008). In this instance, of a contingent worker, since it is based on a short-term contract, the employee can perform the given work and it will cost less than hiring a full-time employee. Thus,

this would benefit correspondingly the organization's budget. On the other hand, while requesting existing employees to work overtime who are already aware of the company's policies and culture, may save time and money, it could also lead to a burnout of existing employees

2.6 Selection and Recruitment Stages

Often, "personnel selection" and "recruitment" are used interchangeably, but they are two separate functions. Recruitment is a procedure that exists in every organization. Once an unfilled vacancy has been identified or once a new project begins, a pool of applicants is contacted either by in house recruiters or by an agency to fill the vacant position. After the candidates have been identified, the organization may then begin the selection process. The following definition for recruitment was given by Alrichs and Nancy (2000): "recruitment is the process of identifying and attracting individuals on a timely basis, in sufficient numbers, with appropriate qualification, to apply for jobs within a business, both from within and outside an organization". However, recruitment is a two-way process; not only do organizations evaluate their candidates, but candidates also evaluate the organization and decide whether to join.

2.6.1 Identifying the vacancy & Job analysis

It is essential for every organization to establish its recruitment objectives to better understand and anticipate needs. Most of the time, as Barber mentioned (1998), "in advance of identifying, the vacancy objectives have to be set", without a solid direction and objectives it is "difficult to develop an effective recruitment strategy" (Rynes & Barber, 1990). Some of the anticipated needs that organizations have are the following: how many people and how quickly they need to be hired; the specific timing that is important for the mission of the organization; the diversity of future employees that will allow the organization to further grow culturally, and training time frame. Then, the second step is to identify the steps for job analysis. As Chang and Kleiner defined job analysis (2002), "is a systematic process of obtaining valid information to aid management in decision making".

There are two stages of job analysis: "(1) to collect and record evidence of the nature of the job; and (2) to shift this recorded data to discover those aspects of the job which are important in relation to the problems that have prompted the undertaking of the job analysis" (Roff, Watson,

1961 as cited in Chang and Kleiner). Furthermore, the structure of the job analysis needs to cover two points: first, identify the skills and personal attributes; and second, the duties and responsibilities that this job requires. Therefore, the main steps in the process of job analysis are the following:

- Clearly identify the tasks conducted by the employee
- Skills required
- Identity the main areas of responsibility
- Note the prevailing working conditions, in respect of physical, social, and financial aspects of the job.
- Identify the personal demands meaning hours of work, work appearance, vernal/numerical ability, necessary experience, and personality factors.

Indeed, there are many ways that information can be obtained but the most important part is that the information provided should be clear and accurate (Chang & Kleiner, 2002). Researchers (Roberson, Collins & Oreg, 2005) have found evidence that the more specific the information about the job position is on an advertisement, the larger the pool of candidates it will recruit. Consequently, after planning and forecasting, the next step in the recruitment process is attracting potential candidates. As Gusdorf (2008) mentioned, “recruitment is a two-way process”. “Organizations are evaluating candidates for a vacancy, but candidates also assess the organization as a prospective employer”. No matter the nature of the job, candidates are assessed depending on their skills, academic background, experience, but also the candidates are interested in finding out how things are done in the organization. Usually, during the interview, candidates are invited to ask questions regarding the culture, working conditions, possibilities to grow, relocation options and so forth.

Organizations in general use means to make themselves more appealing to the candidates and they surely have increased their presence on social media. Social media in the last decade has changed the process of recruiting. Organizations use social media to strength their brand name, attract young graduates, international staff, promote their mission and ideas, recruit personnel and so forth. Nowadays, being compensated fairly and receiving extra benefits is not enough. In this day and age, candidates pay extra attention to a company’s reputation and corporate culture besides compensation; one can say that these are the “new” driving factors for their decision making.

More specifically, studies have shown that reputation is important for both because individuals want to impress others with their affiliation with a reputable organization and because an organization's reputation is associated with positive job attributes (Cable & Turban, 2003). The job itself, as well as the essence of the organization are key factors in determining how appealing a position may be (Chapman, 2006). This also determines the company's employee satisfaction and retention rates. For example, a diverse organization with a contemporary environment that promotes growth and development, flexible working hours, work-life balance and dynamic culture is more likely to have satisfied employees (Cable & Turban, 2003). However, despite the fact that the vast majority of organizations strive for that, they are not always successful.

2.6.2 Internal Recruitment

The traditional method of announcing a job opening in the past was to post a form of the job on the HR bulletin board. Today, in the year 2022, many practices from the past are obsolete. Currently, many organizations post job vacancies digitally through their websites or send emails to all employees.

No matter the method used, the job announcement should include information about the job, the required qualifications expected and instructions on how to apply. It is very important that the job announcement reaches all employees to ensure that all people have a fair chance and the same opportunities to apply (Gusdorf, 2008). Many organizations update their websites with job openings as well as social media with upcoming events, bootcamps and new job openings. There are many advantages to online recruitment: it is less costly, easy to click and post, has faster responses and a wider range of candidates compared to traditional recruiting methods (Gusdorf, 2008). Organizations nowadays use human capital management software that simplifies the recruitment process since it screens applications, administers some selection tests. Thus it reduces HR time required to find the pool of talent.

Internal recruitment can be defined by Anderson (2004) as "the assessment of an employer's current staff to ascertain if any current employees are sufficiently skilled or qualified to perform required job vacancies". When, a business engages usually in internal recruitment, the employee might be reassigned to a new position by giving either a promotion or internal transfer (Newill & Schackleton, 2000). Promotion in every organization has a significant effect on recruitment. Usually, promotion is perceived as a motivational tool and a reward for the employee's hard work,

dedication, and loyalty to the organization. Promotion can influence the rest of the team members; it motivates them and makes them aware of their own development opportunities as well as greater monetary-salary rewards.

As Armstrong noted in his research, there are two motivation theories that are related to intrinsic motivation and expectancy theory. More specifically, intrinsic motivation refers to “the self-generated factors affecting people’s behavior, which may arise from work itself.” Moreover, Hackman and Oldham (1974) emphasized the importance of the core job dimensions as the main motivators, such as: autonomy, tasks, skill variety. This concept is also related to Walton’s approach (1985, cited by Armstrong) “In this new commitment-based approach to the workforce, jobs are designed to be broader than before to combine planning and implementation, and to include efforts to upgrade operations, not just to maintain them”. In other words, someone does the activity because it is internally rewarding, the motivation comes from within, and the outcomes satisfy her or his psychological needs.

On the other hand, expectancy theory explains that individuals’ motivation will be high when they are aware of the rewards that they will receive if they perform well, no matter if the reward will be financial or not. Also, it recognizes that people have different interests, needs and goals. Guest (1997) noted that “It is a short step to specify the HR practices that encourage high skills and abilities, for example, employee involvement and possible performance-related pay; and an appropriate role structure and role perception, for example, job design and extensive communication and feedback”. When individuals know what is expected and the rewards that come along (bonus, promotion, title change), they will display higher performance and consciously gather all their efforts to get there.

No matter if employees are intrinsically motivated or not, internal recruiting has both advantages and disadvantages. Some of the advantages are the following: cost effective compared with external recruiting, opportunity for current employees to grow as professionals, less time needed to get employees familiar with company culture and in terms of training, and last, internal recruiting boosts staff morale because of recognition of their hard work. Some of the disadvantages are the following: limited pool of candidates, external candidates can bring fresh ideas and experience, less diverse teams, and some employees might not pursue this opportunity just because of a lack of motivation.

2.6.3 External Recruitment

External recruiting refers to generating applicants from outside the organization and it is usually the most common practice that organizations usually follow (Anyim, Ekowaba & Anthony 2012). Depending on the size of the organization and the hiring budget, some firms decide to use the resources and help of private agencies. Those agencies work hand in hand with the organization's HR department and provided by the firm's criteria, the agency will generate a pool of candidates that are potential matches for the job. Usually, the agency goes through the initial screening and the first interview and sends the qualified ones for a second interview. This can save valuable time for the HR department and speed the recruitment process, However, hiring a third party is significantly expensive (Gusdorf, 2008). Likewise, external recruiting has its advantages and disadvantages. Some of the advantages are: a large pool of candidates, diverse teams, creating opportunities for experienced candidates and promoting competition. Some of the disadvantages are costly processes, turnover, time, and effort.

Chapter 3: Recruitment Tools

When it comes to recruiting employees, there is no right or wrong method. Most organizations use a variety of practices and tools depending on the quality of applicants, the number of applications, the speed of filling the position and the means by which recruiters do that. Recruiters use a variety of methods such as job advertisements, online portals, word-of-mouth, social media to attract new talent. Today's competitiveness to attract only the best of the best, the "recruitment" function has been viewed as a critical function (Breugh, 2013). Research has shown that recruiters' intention to use these methods depends on pre-hire and post-hire outcomes that need to be taken into consideration. Those considerations can be quality and quantity of candidates, speed of filling the position, performance, commitment, and satisfaction of the applicants (Muduli & Trivedi, 2020). For instance, Fisher et al. (2014) found that recruiters prefer to use social media recruitment as it is the most cost-effective, attracts young, graduated professionals and fills up the vacancies very fast.

3.1 Recommendations (Employee Referrals)

Employee referrals is another method for finding suitable candidates to fill a job position, and it is very effective. According to Breugh (2008), employee referrals are effective because:

1. Current employees are fully informed about the open vacancy and will inform potential candidates and make a more informed and mature decision about whether they should apply.
2. Current employees will refer candidates that they know and believe that they are a good fit for the position.
3. Applicants who know current employees will try to perform well in their jobs, so they do not ruin their reputation.
4. Current employees are more likely to be closer and help applicants with their work tasks.
5. Employee referrals are a great way to attract new qualified talent.

3.2 Organization's Website, Social Networks & College Recruiting

Through their websites, companies attract candidates. Simply by posting vacancies and providing information about the mission of the company, what they do, in which markets they

operate, what services they provide is not only a low-cost way to promote the company, but it also attracts applicants who will return to their websites again. The only limitation is that websites need to be up and running and be tested before being available to people (Breugh, 2008). Social networks like LinkedIn, have evolved in the last 10 years and are used widely today. For instance, a candidate can create a profile and upload their resume, academic and professional experience, reach out to recruiters via message, view job openings, network with other professionals and apply directly through the company's page on LinkedIn.

Also, recruiters can find new talent on LinkedIn, reach out and set up an interview. There are two reasons that businesses use this strategy, the first one is by using existing filters available on those platforms (LinkedIn), they can filter on the criteria they are looking for in the candidate. For instance, "Data Analyst, 3years experience" they can find suitable candidates. Second, they can place advertisements for job openings and upcoming events, so their page receives traffic and candidates revisit (Sherman, 2008). Finally, college recruitment is a great way to attract college students and offer them internship programs that up to their completion could lead them being hired full-time. Usually, recruiters visit colleges around town, give speeches about the organization and inform students about the available openings. At the end, students approach the company of their interest, introduce themselves, hand them their resume and wait for the company to reach out.

3.3 Human Resources Selection

As it has already been mentioned above, recruitment and selection are two different processes. Recruitment has to do with generating and attracting potential candidates. Selection is concerned with the process of deciding who is the one(s) that will be offered the job. The most qualified and suitable candidates are evaluated to fill the position. The selection process is very important since it not only helps the organizations survive competition but also it helps with other costs. Moreover, some of these costs are turnover costs that result from inappropriately hired personnel that did not meet standards; future costs: resulting from training new employees and lastly, process cost, resulting from the hiring procedures and methods used (Κατού,2017). There is a variety of methods used and the time needed to fill the open position. Most organizations follow this pattern in the selection process below.

3.3.1 Application

To begin with, an application is required for the candidate to complete, which is usually done early in the selection process. The candidate must provide the employer with personal details, education, employment history, activities, skills, interests, and there may be some fields regarding compensation packages. The applicant must respond truthfully to all the fields, but research (Gursdorf, 2008) reveals that “illegal (or inappropriate) application items are still common”. Usually, the inappropriate fields have to do with citizenship information, salaries, and social security (SSN). However, even if applicants provide wrongful information, especially on citizenship and SSN, when the screening process begins, these candidates that do not meet these criteria will be eliminated promptly. As far as compensation packages go, recruiters have an idea of what the market pays and how salaries are adjusted. A lot of applications have a reference section where applicants provide past reference checks. In addition, at this stage, applicants provide their resume along with the applications. Today, organizations use applicant tracking system software to help manage and automate their hiring and recruitment practices.

3.3.2 Screening Interview

Organizations before they move into the selection process prefer to do a screening interview of those applicants that appear qualified based on the information submitted on their application and resume. Screening interviews used to be more common over the phone, but nowadays organizations use applicant tracking system software which automates the process and eliminates employees that do not meet certain criteria. It must be noted that if the candidate is not qualified then the interviewer may refer the candidate to another position when the right opportunity appears. If no position is available and the candidate’s skills are not a good fit, then the process ends there (Gusdorf, 2008).

3.3.3 Interviewing Candidates

An interview is a verbal assessment of the candidate. At that stage, the recruiter finds out more about the candidate’s academic background, work experience (if any), skills and how the candidate can contribute to the organization. According to Millmore (2003), 99 percent of British firms utilize interviews as a selection tool and especially behavior-based ones. At an interview, not only does the recruiter get to know the candidate, but also the candidate has the chance to learn

more about the company culture by asking questions and assessing if the organization is a good fit for him/her as well. Unlike a written test (that some organizations require candidates to take), there is no a clear right or wrong answer provided by the candidate. Therefore, candidates: “have a huge potential for error, depending on the questions asked, the answers given and the interviewer’s own potential bias” (Hollenbeck, 2002). To be successful in an interview, a candidate must have a thorough understanding of the job requirements and demonstrate to the interviewer that her/his skills and experience are transferrable to this role.

There are many types of interviews, such as: structured, semi-structured, non-directive, behavioral and situational/problem solving interviews. In a structured interview, the interviews follow a standard pattern of questions asked to all candidates. This process helps guarantee that all candidates are assessed using the same criteria. On the other hand, situational interviews, try to discover “what would you do in this situation”, which allows the candidates to provide answers to justify the actions that they would have taken in the given scenario. Gusdorf (2008) insisted, “almost all organizations use behavioral interviews at some point in the selection process”. According to Morgeson (2012), behavioral interviews are crucial because they “focus on demonstrating how applicants exhibited job-related behavior in past-work and academic situations”, by sharing information about past behavior and actions that took place, which in a way can be a valid predictor of future behavior at work. The non-directive interview is the complete opposite of a structured one. In this case, the interviewer has not planned any of the questions that he/she will be asking, but rather allows the candidate to express his/her thoughts, allowing the interviewer to ask further questions derived from the answers that the candidate provided. However, this technique seems not to be as focused and reliable selection tool as the behavioral interview (Breugh, 2008). Following that, there are team or individual interviews consisting of representatives from various areas of the organizations; in addition to the recruiter(s), managers or senior associates represent wider areas of interest, limiting the selection bias and increasing the objectivity of the made decision. The only downside is everyone’s availability due to conflicting schedules.

3.3.4 Validity of Selection Methods

Organizations need to attract and retain the best if they hope to survive in this competitive market. The costs associated with hiring can be very high, especially in the event of turnover.

Decision makers in organizations want to ensure that their recruitment and selection methods are effective. Despite that, there are some methods that have considerable flaws in terms of “reliability” and “validity”. Reliability refers to the effectiveness of the selection tool along with the consistency of results obtained. Validity refers to the ability to predict future job performance. As mentioned in Ekuma’s paper, Hausknecht (2004), relying on the Attraction theory, suggests that that organizations needs to maintain a positive image during the selection process because there are costs involved with losing top performers. If there are applicants who feel that some aspects of the selection process are invasive, they may view the organization as less attractive. As it was concluded by the following research: “Use of hiring methods with increased predictive validity leads to substantial increases in employee performance as measured in percentage increases in output, increased monetary value output, and increased learning of job-related skills” (Hunter, Schmidt, & Judiesch, 1990).

Furthermore, those hired through the selection process should provide the greatest utility and productivity on the tasks assigned to them (Allen et al., 2007). There is always high risk involved with selection decisions, and as Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006) pointed out: “inappropriate selection decisions reduce organizational effectiveness, invalidate reward and development strategies, are frequently unfair on individuals recruited and can be distressing for managers who have to deal with unsuitable employees”. HR professionals should strive to maximize validity in the selection process. However, selection is a two-way process of organizations selecting suitable candidates and vice versa. Thus, the process must be fair, “dealing equitably, honestly and courteously with all applicants and providing frameworks within which diverse candidates can demonstrate their abilities” (Pilbeam & Corbridge, 2006).

Therefore, in order to avoid incidents of poor selection, organizations must examine the implications of inconsistent and poor selection methods and adopt a model that could be both effective and efficient and that would be in line with the organizational culture. Indeed, no perfect selection system exists, nor does the idea that because these practices work in organization A, they will be equally suitable for organization B.

3.3.5 Fairness in Selection

Fair selection in recruitment must be objective, consistent, and non-discriminatory. Anderson (2004) found that resumes, interviews, and work samples were “well-regarded methods”

while tests were held in “low regards with personality and ability tests receiving an intermediate evaluation”. For this reason, employers should be very thorough when choosing which selection methods, they will proceed with in order to retain the level of credibility among applicants. According to Avery and Renz (1992), fairness issues and problems arise when: 1. “the processes and procedures used in selecting employees” 2. “The nature and kind of the information used in forming decisions; and 3. “the resulting outcomes of selection”. Let’s now examine the case of the European Union (EU) and the general guidelines that are in place for a fair selection of personnel.

Transparency is one of the key principles that characterizes the activities of the civil service of the European Union. All institutions, bodies, agencies, and offices of the EU must act in the same manner and set objective, consistent and non-discriminatory selection criteria. The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) was created in 2003 to serve as a centralized supporting recruiting branch for all European institutions (Eu training).

One could make the analogy that, the EPSO can be viewed as the HR department of a company but for the European Union. The competitions organized by EPSO are published in the Official Journal, which gives an overview of the candidate profiles, required criteria and the selection process (ECA, 2019). As Rodriguez - Medal notes in his article: “The EU selection procedure must be transparent in order to be consistent with Democracy and the principle of good administration” (2014).

Moreover, the institutions select their staff through competitions composed of several exams (this depends on the position) that are administered by the EPSO. The goal of EPSO is to find suitable candidates and provide a list to EU institutions to recruit staff for future openings. To ensure transparency, candidates have to follow certain steps prior to the exams. First and foremost, candidates must register and submit their application files online. The competitions are divided depending on whether the candidates are permanent or contractual agents. Permanent staff undergo two stages of examination; one being a series of tests and depending on the results, they may be moved to the second stage, which is the assessment center. Once candidates have completed both stages, the selection board appointed for the competition is responsible for reviewing and assessing the performance of the candidates and selecting those who will be considered for the reserve list (ECA, 2019). Below this figure with EPSO data sums up the selection and recruitment cycle.

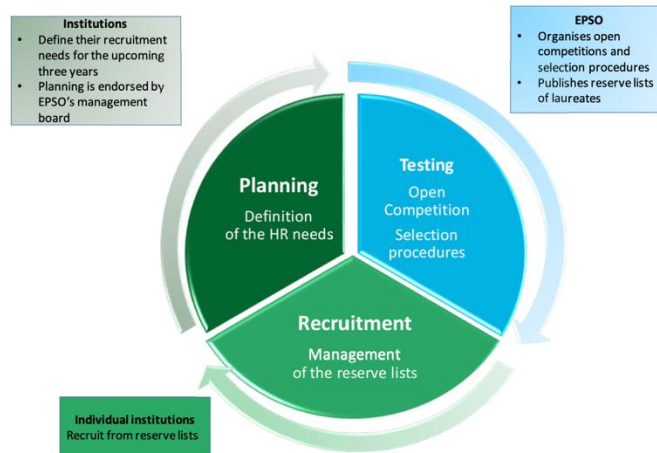


Figure 2: EPSO data sums up the selection and recruitment cycle

The goal of EPSO is to provide the EU institutions with the best workforce to match their needs. This is, of course, accomplished by best practices and effective and efficient selection procedures. EPSO strives for: methods that attract a diverse talent pool, adoption of innovative mindset and ability to respond to new trends, ensure that procedures are clear, open, transparent and accessible to all candidates. The list below includes the operating principles of EPSO to achieve their vision (from the official website of the European Union (2022)).

Precision: EPSO strives to adopt the best selection methods, by testing the right competences with the right tests. The aim is to target the most suitable candidates and evaluate their performance according to international best practices.

1. **Agility:** EPSO's processes are increasingly modular and adaptable to the specific needs of the recruiting institutions. Their feedback and regular internal reviews are an integral part of this approach.
2. **Speed:** The duration of EPSO's competitions is getting shorter. This is achieved by anticipating and strengthening the work of selection boards and staff, enhancing cooperation with client institutions and streamlining selection processes, stripping them of unnecessary bureaucratic elements.

On the other hand, the list below includes the principles that seem to reflect standards associated with fairness in the United States (Avery, Renz, 1992):.

1. According to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (USA), makes it illegal for organizations to use information about race, sex, religion, national origin, and age in the decision making.
2. “Merit-based” variable are considered fairer. Attributes such as ability, skills and experience are those that need to be measured and not family and social network cronyism, political direction, or social class – those are irrelevant to job performance.
3. Job related variables that are immediately concerned with job performance are fairer than variable that bear no direct relationship to the job.
4. Information that violates privacy will be considered less fair. This is a bit challenging since the use of psychological tests explore certain patterns, motives, emotions are invasive. This depends on the candidate’s interpretation of what is private or personal. Generally speaking, gathering information or personal nature seem to be “fair” under job related circumstances. It is hard to find the balance between the organizations right to know and the application right” to retain personal information.
5. Information that is easily faked and misrepresented is considered unfair.

Organizations need to keep pushing for fair recruitment selections and use best practices to do so. According to Morgeson (2012), there are two different approaches; the first one has to do with creating hiring teams and the second approach is standardizing the process. Following the first approach, rather than having one person interview the candidate, a team of individuals such as recruiter, hiring manager(s), supervisors etc., who are already part of the company, interview the candidate, resulting in a plethora of evaluations, discussions about the candidate, whether he/she is suitable or not. This approach eliminates bias and makes employees more involved in the hiring process, ensuring that they have an input into the development of the team. The second approach refers to a standardized hiring process, where the recruiter or the hiring manager has a specific set of questions to ask and evaluate the candidate in a standard way of assessment.

3.4 Recruitment Tools Conclusion

Without a doubt, the terms recruitment and selection are confusing and difficult to distinguish what falls within each category. Multiple definitions have been given to these two notions but there is nothing specifying how recruiting, selecting, and onboarding employees with high validity of being successful. The aim of this research is to educate, view other perspectives

and discuss the use of Internet and social media and other methods in modern recruitment and selection process. Even though doing research in recruitment and selection is quite difficult task since the world is evolving, what works now does not mean will work in a few years.

As mentioned above, selection is a “two-way street” since not only the organization chooses the specific candidate but also the candidate on his/her end must choose if the organization fits them. This comes down to how the organization’s reputation has significantly influenced the job applicants and traffic in terms of attraction and retention. The more positive image and reputation the organization has the more will attract, retain, and will continue to attract new applicants. In addition, the economic recession has affected the recruitment and selection both in public and private sector.

Chapter 4: United Nations Overview

The focus of this dissertation being international organizations' practices in recruitment it is considered to be important to focus on intergovernmental organizations specifically in United Nations (UN). The reason why I chose to study the UN and one of its agencies is the involvement of 193 member countries, which translates to cultural diversity and international experience. The organization clearly hires for best skill and competencies and their recruitment process is very similar to the one practiced in the private sector. Furthermore, the study examines best practices used by other multinational firms such as Deloitte, PwC and L'Oreal.

Lately, the sustainability of recruiting has been the center of attention for many scholars and practitioners as it is directly related to staff morale and the sustainability of employees and businesses (Wolcott et al, 2008). This case is also applied to the United Nations (UN), the largest inter-governmental organization in the world, which strives for the sustainable development of the world (Terzi and Fall, 2014).

4.1 Staff Recruitment in United Nations

Recruitment in the UN and its specialized agencies includes two major types: non-staff recruitment and staff recruitment. The non-staff recruitment, even though no formal definition exists, can be defined as those recruiting individuals that work for specific UN assignments with relatively short period of time; are bound by short term contracts rather than the permanent staff rules of employment. This type of personnel are not officially UN employees thus they do not enjoy the same immunities as permanent UN staff. On the other hand, UN staff members are recruited as international civil servants and are entitled to all privileges (Liu, 2020). Along with that, they have the responsibility to abide by the rules as they are outlined in the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations (UN, 2018). Some other characteristics of UN staff members are that they hold longer employment contracts and are better compensated than non-staff personnel.

There are two staff personnel classifications: 1. Local staff members who are recruited from the country where the recruiting agencies are located and 2. International staff members who are recruited globally. It is important to mention that in any case where there is a need to cover a position non-locally, if there are qualified candidates, they may be recruited. To better understand the size of the organization, according to the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

2020 published, the latest headcount is 116,388 employees (CEB, 2022). What makes the UN so unique is its international nature by default, being multi-lingual and diverse in geographically speaking and gender representativeness. In order to achieve sustainability of its workforce, UN accentuates the need for meritocracy and diversity. Additionally, the UN Charter highlights: “the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible” (UN, 2012, article 101).

The Charter of the United Nations includes the fundamental values and principles that form the starting point for developing the institutional framework for HRM. The framework comprises rules, staff regulations, HRM strategies, policies, procedures, and practices. Integrity and ethical conduct are fundamental and must underpin the development of the institutional framework as well as its implementation and application on a day-to-day basis.

To be more specific, recruitment in the United Nations fully respects the fundamental principles. According to the United Nations’ (2012):

- a) The staff regulations and rules include the general framework and principles as per (b) to (h) below.
- (b) The recruitment process identifies and selects staff who demonstrate the highest standards of efficiency, competency and integrity.
- (c) Selection decisions are transparent and free of bias or discrimination of any kind.
- (d) Selection is made on a competitive basis for all positions irrespective of category, grade, or level. Selection decisions are based on pre-approved minimum requirements and evaluation criteria and are transparent and well-documented. Managers are held accountable for those decisions.
- (e) Staff at the professional level and above are recruited on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Preference is given at the time of selection to candidates from countries which are unrepresented or underrepresented, provided that qualifications and competencies are equal.

(f) Due consideration is given at the time of selection to the need for achieving gender parity, particularly for positions at the professional level and above.

(g) Full regard is given to the qualifications and experience of persons already in service, without prejudice to the recruitment of new talent; and

(h) Due consideration is given to knowledge of at least two working languages, particularly for positions at the professional level and above, and to knowledge of additional working languages in specific duty stations as mandated.

What does the United Nations do differently in their recruitment process then?

United Nations has set detailed written procedures in place to guide and record each step of the recruitment process. The procedures are well known to the hiring managers and are consistently applied and implemented with due regard to transparency throughout the recruitment process. Not only that, but these procedures are very frequently reviewed and revised to be updated. Many organizations have such policies and procedures in place, although the degree of detail varies significantly. For example, in some organizations, the selection and procedures are found in a dedicated chapter of their administrative manuals (WMO, ICAO) or even in a separate administrative issuance (UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF) and others have stand-alone tools for specific procedures (UNDO, WFP).

4.1.1 Staff Selection Process

The process of creating a job opening in the UN does not differ from a private firm's process; it is standardized and begins with the *Hiring Manager* who identifies one or more positions. Forecasting and planning of the expected hiring needs is usually done before hand, so when the time to hire comes, all stakeholders involved have an idea of the expected results. The process begins with the Hiring Manager who identifies a need and prepares a job requisition. The job requisition includes requisition information, posting information such as: job function, level of experience, job function, competencies, position information, hiring team information, education background, work experience section, resume, cover letter and so forth. Once the Job requisition draft has been created, then the appropriate stakeholders such as the Staffing Table Manager, Senior

Recruiter and Recruiter review the draft. The process ends when the *Recruiter* publishes the job opening.

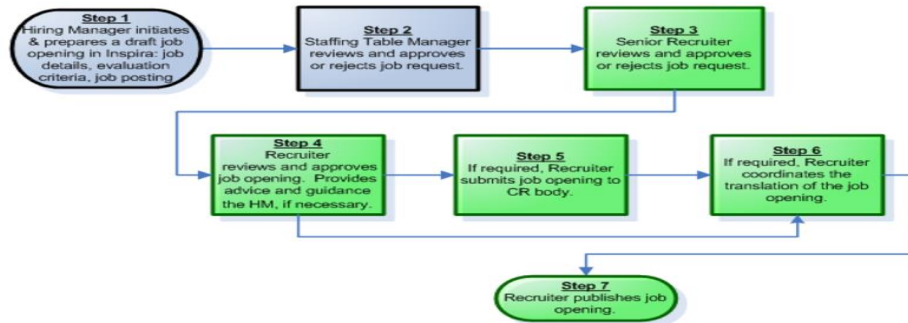


Figure 3: Creation, Approval and Posting of a Job Requisition. Source: United Nations Recruiter Manual 2015.

The next step in the recruiting process is the automated pre-screening and HR assessment process, which begins when the applicant applies to a job opening through *inspira*. *Inspira* is a web-based application where users (Recruiters – Managers) monitor the flow of the recruiting process, create/post job requisitions, and facilitate the whole recruiting cycle. Applicants must create an account first before they can search or apply for any position. After the account creation, and the completion of the candidate profile, the candidate can apply in any position of their interest. Once the applications are submitted, *inspira*'s system performs the pre-screening automatically. The automated pre-screening mechanism will screen out non-eligible and non-qualified applicants based on pre-determined requirements (Recruiter's Manual). When the system sorts out the applications, it places the candidates in different statuses. The applicants can fall into the following categories: HR Assessment Required (recruiter manually evaluates each applicant), Screened and Rejected. Both HR Assessment and Screened are eligible applicants that the Recruiter will provide the list to the Hiring Manager. The *Hiring Manager* is responsible for evaluating the applicants in a much less formal setting in order to understand if the applicant is a good fit overall. Moreover, the *Hiring Manager* always assesses in a transparent manner these specific requirements: academics, language and experience and based on a compliance check form, the *Recruiter* checks if all steps of the evaluation process have been followed. Once the *Hiring Manager* submits his recommended list, the *Recruiter* will then update the status matrix that contains information related to the candidate and specific position information. Following that, the *Central Review Body*, if required, will review the recommended list and the *Head of Department* has the authority to make

selection decisions. After careful consideration, *inspira*'s system informs the *Human Resources Officer* who then informs the candidate(s) that have been selected. The onboarding process will be initiated by the *Recruiter* and lastly, *inspira* will inform the candidates who have been rostered and the ones who have not been found suitable.

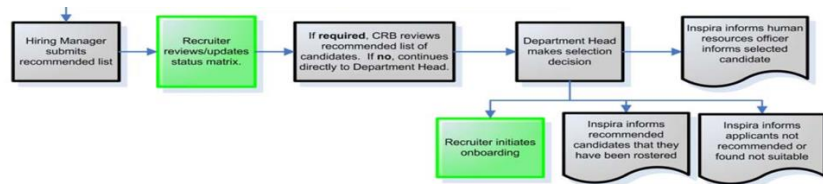


Figure 4: Final Decision approval steps. Source: United Nations Recruiter Manual 2015.

4.2 Attracting the Right Applicants

Attracting the right pool of applicants really depends on a good job opening, which affects the volume of applications received. A good job opening should be clear, simple, and well-written, which clearly explains the position and competencies, as well as the experience expected for this role. A plethora of methods of attracting applicants exist, but the Hiring Manager selects his or her own depending on the type of position. Someone must keep in mind two factors: a) what is the nature of the position, e.g. academic, managerial? expert of a field? and b) the size and location of the pool of applicants (Recruiters Manual, 2015). Here is a list of methods the UN uses for attracting applicants:

1. Mainstream press (print and online newspapers)
2. Alternative press (professional publications, local, national or student publications)
3. AHRMIO (Association for Human Resources Management in International Organizations)
4. CEB (Chief Executive Board)
5. UNICS (United Nations Information Centers)
6. Resident coordinators
7. Internet (Job boards, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)
8. Recruitment/employment agency
9. Head hunting/search firm
10. Invitation or nomination (military and civilian police nominations)

11. Network meetings, permanent missions to the United Nations Secretariat, embassies, special interest groups, professional associations, and word-of-mouth

4.3 The Evaluation Criteria

In this section, we will look at the evaluation criteria used by the Hiring Manager(s) to pre-screen and evaluate applicants. The standard areas that are being evaluated are: the required years and field of work, academic qualifications, and knowledge of languages. In addition, a series of evaluation screening questions that are associated with the job opening (Recruiter's Manual, 2015).

4.4 Efficiency and cost of UN recruitment

Undeniably, the UN aims to recruit based on competence, fairness, and integrity. However, the efficiency is unlikely to be maintained and the costs are expected to be high. This is justified by the fact that to ensure fair recruitment from beginning to end, efficient tools and complicated monitoring procedures may be relatively lengthy (Bulkeley, 1990). This has as a result that a lengthy recruitment process proportionally affects the recruitment cost and the efficiency of the whole procedure. Significant time is consumed by the organization to post a job requisition to *inspira* (specifically for UN), to approve the job requisition, to identify suitable candidates and at the same time assess them. All this, results in reduced sustainability of UN recruitment. For instance, in Kretchik's research (2003), it is mentioned that it takes 4 months to establish a UN operational force and find trainers who will deliver training to the newcomers. It can be concluded that the process mentioned above is problematic since it is very difficult to establish a "perfect" process while fairness and recruiting targets meet and recruitment costs and inefficiencies are close to zero.

4.5 Meritocracy and diversity in UN recruitment

UN organization relies on its own working contracts with government bodies to source and select suitable candidates and have very limited contact with recruiting services at the national level (Bulkeley, 1990). However, the concept of using recruiting services becomes a dilemma because it can jeopardize neutrality and meritocracy. In one of his writings, Haynes (2008) mentioned an example of the former Soviet Union that used to have an unusual way of recruiting. Moreover, instead of direct recruitment, the government proposed a list of individuals to work in the UN under

contracts. This example displays another situation where meritocracy and diversity are challenged in UN recruitment as those candidates may not have the highest competence to hold this specific position. Here comes another challenge that is often missed, the emphasis on both meritocracy and geographic diversity. One can safely say that not all countries/regions experience the same socioeconomic development. Some nationals have had the privilege to grow up, study and gain experience in developed countries, where educational levels are higher by default and there are more advantages when applying for a UN position (Liu, 2020). To put things into perspective, Stiglitz (2000) argues that in the International Monetary Fund's recruitment of economists, even though they pay attention and give opportunities to economists from developing countries, they predominately hire economists from elite universities mainly located in developed countries.

4.6 Recruitment in United Nations Development Program Overview

The mission of UNDP is to help countries progress on human development and provide “advocacy, policy and technical support in poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, and environmental and sustainable development” (UNDP 2008-11). The world is evolving, and globalization has brought advantages across borders both to developed and developing countries, making it harder for them to find the balance and right mix of policies, legislation and social structures to improve the lives of their people. As the external environment changes, it has a direct effect on the internal environment, which means that a new set of skills and competences are required of UNDP staff. According to the UNDP (2008-11), the organization wants to attract and retain top-level talent and the organization aims to offer a flexible work environment. Human resources are about people and people are the core asset of the UNDP. Therefore, HR goes above and beyond to recruit skilled, diverse and dedicated employees. More specifically, “The UNDP values of integrity, transparency, mutual respect, professionalism, accountability, and results orientation provide clear standards for the ways staff members interact with clients and stakeholders, with each other, and in fulfilling their work responsibilities” (UNDP 2008-11).

The UNDP Strategic Plan (2008-11) is about achieving development results and it does that by focusing on the following dimensions:

Dimension 1. Talent Sourcing is about attracting the retaining talented people committed to the values of the organization.

Dimension 2. Staff Capacity is about developing the capacity of staff members to reach their full potential.

Dimension 3. Enabling Environment is about creating a positive and enabling working environment that motivates staff.

Our focus is on Dimension 1, talent sourcing. As the external and internal environment evolves, UNDP needs to know its human resources needs. That is done through forecasting and planning and getting the right people in the right place at the right time. The first step that UNDP takes it to “identify workforce needs and the profiles that will be required according to organizational design, where and when in order to deliver on development results in the years ahead” (UNDP 2008-11). UNDP pays great attention to recruiting a diverse talent pool and ensures that the process is open and transparent.

Chapter 5: Reforming the traditional methods of selection and attempting to use more innovative Practices of Recruitment by the Greek Public Sector.

The employee's recruitment, engagement and training are among the most important and crucial aspects in running a successful organization. More specifically, the recruitment and training of an employee has a significant impact on the candidate experience as well as on the organization's growth. Nonetheless the most challenging task for any organization, no matter private or public sector, is to sustainably recruit and train their employees. The employees, on the other hand, have been chosen for their competence, potential, diversity, uniqueness, skills and for bringing a positive and healthy change to the organization; i.e., they add value to the whole organization.

Almost everyone is aware of the traditional methods of recruitment that are not other than job advertisements, resume submission, often test conduction and the interview part. These conventional methods have been criticized as being outdated, tedious and time-consuming. Nevertheless, organizations keep using them to recruit, train and retain their employees. However, this model of recruiting has been facing significant challenges. Some of them are long hiring cycles, high cost, time consuming, ineffective candidate hiring (Obaid et al. 2020). Those conventional techniques are so outdated that they need to be replaced with a modern and fresh touch that will reflect today's society to get the maximum out of the candidates. The traditional way of doing things has started to fade in today's society.

Most organizations outsource their recruitment process to third parties due to a lack of resources such as job portals and digital marketing. Outsourcing can be very costly, but it also does not encourage organizations to transform their conventional methods of recruiting. It is important to note that not all organizations that outsource do have traditional recruitment styles; it is not always the case. Organizations put their best efforts, energies, and resources into making all their employees follow the common goal and vision. Through training programs, employees are encouraged to refresh, unlearn, learn, and enhance their skills and knowledge. Organizations support the growth and development of their employees either through online courses, workshops, seminars, or certification. The truth is, though, that these kinds of methods require a lot of time and effort by the organization and due to the busy schedules, employees are either unable to commit or attend when a project is in-progress.

5.1 Gamification

One of the most well-known techniques for personnel recruiting that organizations use is *gamification*. As a concept, gamification emerged around 2010, and is defined by Deterding as “the use of game design elements in non-gaming contexts” (Deterding et al 2011). Therefore, gamification makes a very traditional procedure entertaining and fun for the candidates. The gamification industry has already reached 2.17 billion dollars by 2017 and is estimated to be 19.39 billion dollars by 2023. It is a promising approach to hire, engage and train people. Individuals are more interactive, engaged and has a positive outcome for the organization as well (Simpson, Jenkins 2015).

How does it work?

This technique aims to evaluate a candidate comprehensively and his/her ability to perform the required tasks. The idea is to develop a game-based solution that has various challenges relevant to the position announced by the organization (Huber & Hilty 2015). So, instead of asking candidates to complete assignments or answer multiple questions, you can ask them to play a game for a few minutes. When gamification is applied to the recruitment process, it brings several benefits. First and foremost, it allows the elimination of candidates at a faster pace as it allows firms to test specific skills such as: innovative thinking or time management and measure the responses. For this reason, the game must represent a realistic impression of the job and pre-selection process. It can help the organization build diverse teams and reduce the time to hire. The gamified solutions “help the organization judge the performance of the candidate with more space to express its original talent and ability” (Obaid et al., 2020). It can be concluded that game-based personnel selection and assessment techniques have been adopted to predict job performance (Armstrong et al., 2016). Remarkably, the game elements make the audience feel motivated to keep moving (motivational part) to achieve scores, badges, levels, or points. Through those motivational features, users are kept motivated to continue the activity. According to Penenberg (2015), corporate gamification improves performance precisely because of factors such as use of rewards, which help engagement and reinforce positive aspects.

Gamification is mostly seen not only in recruitment process but has become very common in employee learning and training. Basically, the game elements can be used to maximize learning out-comes. For instance, every year, employees are required to take a safety class, which is most

likely would be a lecture video that the employee must watch and learn the appropriate workplace safety measures. Research has shown that, this standardized way of learning results in “ineffectiveness such that workplace safety performance is consistently poor before and after training” (Armstrong, Landers, 2018). This is why organizations have redesigned their training materials to make learning more engaging and fun. The simplest game elements that are used are badges, points, and leaderboards (Armstrong et al., 2015). When employees are awarded with points, this will reinforce those good behaviors and give them a feeling of personal achievement.

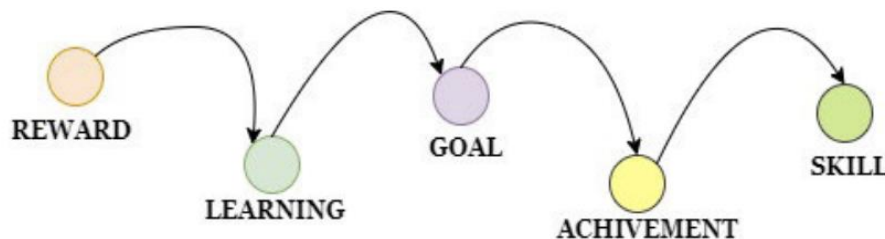


Figure 5: Milestones of gamification.

5.1.1 Reveal the Game by L’Oreal

This section examines two international companies that have been using gamification for the recruitment process.

L’Oreal Paris is a well-known French multinational company in the field of cosmetics and beauty. L’Oreal has developed “Reveal the Game” to help candidates challenge themselves in the development of a new product using a real-life situation. The candidates can play against each other and at the end, share their results on social media. Gamification has enabled the company to screen the applicant’s analytical skills, which would have been impossible through traditional hiring methods (Joy, 2017). The candidates take part in the game in the hopes of either winning prizes or being selected for the recruitment process. L’Oreal is planning to recruit 20% of the company’s managerial team by using gamification. Another benefit of gamification is that it can reach a wide pool of applicants from around the world. The company twice a year announces a very enticing prize, and the winner of the game is determined by both the “highest score” and the “best response” to the game’s final question. The hype and excitement that gamification creates especially to Millennials and Gen Z is significant since their social media exposure is much bigger.

5.1.2 Mutipoly by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC)

Another great example is PwC, a multinational accounting and consulting firm that wanted to enhance the process of recruiting and employee retention. For this example, it was the Hungarian legal entity where the human resources department set a goal to increase the engagement of its job applicants during the search process. Of course, the formal structure of PwC's website can intimidate first time applicants and they will spend less time than expected navigating and searching for more information about the company. Thus, the HR team assumed that if another tool was in place, it would attract a more engaged candidate pool who would stay with the firm for much longer. The need for an alternative recruiting method was both for the quality of employees and retention, and, if I may add, time cost constraints. The Hungarian firm came up with Multipoly, a game that permits candidates to see how ready they are to enter the firm.

The game placed the candidates into teams and then presented them with business problems. They then had to bring solutions. The game presented them with a real-life business problem, one that they could face at the job, where they had to consult together to find the optimal solution. The aim of the specific game is to identify each player's competences and skills and determine who is ready for a face-to-face interview. The firm reports that since the use and implementation of the game, the candidate pool has grown by 190 percent and users who are interested in knowing more about PwC have increased by 78 percent. (Joy, 2020).

In today's modern world, managers need to seek new methods to attract applicants to their organizations. Conventional methods such as: multiple choice questions, and multiple interviews are not the way to go. Gamification has changed recruitment methods because it reflects the modern era.

5.2 Online Social Media Recruitment

Organizations have been using social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to attract talent by sharing information about the company's culture, achievements, and career related information (Alf, 2013). A great example is Microsoft, which has developed a specific website for recruitment using job blogs and life at work videos to provide information for job seekers (Joos 2008). By this way job seekers can get an idea-sense of what is the work life in

Microsoft and decide for themselves if it's the right fit for them. Similarly, Deloitte places employee testimonials on social media (either as short video clips on Instagram or Youtube) that describe a day in Deloitte, work-life balance, the impact of the company, or provide information about upcoming events. Further, the decision of the company to use social media as a means of recruitment, which is both efficient and cost-friendly and communications that are instant. Social media is a free form of participation that allows individuals to participate and build genuine relationship (Narvey, 2009).

Social Media Recruitment (SMR) is usually preferred by recruiters because of its easy accessibility, simplicity, active processing, meeting timeframes, cost savings and benefits of recruitment outcomes (ROs) (Girard et al. 2013). Recruiters share job advertisements, send messages to potential applicants containing information about the organization, job and company culture through various communication media. Interestingly, 40% of the studies found that SMR could be the most effective method compared to traditional methods to recruit research participants for medical research (Topolevec-Vranic and Nataeajan, 2016). As Joy (2020) mentions in her research, "Researches have studied brand activity and its impact on student recruitment and found that students tend to perform positively when universities are utilizing social media as a recruitment method" (Rutter et al., 2016). Similarly, Fisher et al. (2014), concluded that SMR has become part of a more cost-effective recruitment approach and is a faster way to get employment opportunities posted repeatedly without spending more money.

In a research conducted in Gujarat, India, the target demographic included recruiters, HR managers, directors, and managers from the industrial and service industries. More specifically it was a survey-based study that followed previous research that had been conducted by other scholars. The aim of the survey was to measure the effectiveness of social media recruitment, credibility/satisfaction, and recruitment outcomes. Furthermore, the sample that was selected from the recruiters engaged in SMR through LinkedIn (Koch et al., 2018). The results of the study suggested: Firstly, that SMR intention is significantly related to pre-hire outcomes; proved that recruiters use social media because of its easy accessibility to quality applicants, ensures genuineness of resources, meets timeframes, active processing and ensures cost savings. Secondly, the research proved that SMR intention is related to post hire Ros. In other words, recruiters also must meet their own targets and social media helps with time-saving in hiring better talent in terms

of performance and endurance in retaining the talent. Finally, the study proved that SMR is an alternative way of recruiting that can generate significant ROs.

Based on the results, SMR can help and make recruiters' jobs easier since it provides reliable, credible, and sufficient information unlike traditional recruiting methods. As society evolves recruiters must also adjust their way of working to reflect those changes. Today, job seekers' first place to look for a job is through LinkedIn, where they can create their own profile and contact recruiters by sending them a message and displaying interest in a specific position and providing their CV. It can be said that SMR is not just for recruiters but also applicants.

5.3 STAR Method

This is another method used by recruiters to conduct behavioral based interviews. STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action, Result. Recruiters use this method to learn more about how a candidate handled and reacted to specific work situations. More specifically, recruiters use looking for proof of problem solving, creativity, teamwork, accuracy, analytical ability, any type of indicator that will reassure that the candidate is fit for the position and fit for the organization. For example, the recruiter may ask the candidate to reference an incident at work that brought tension to the team and how he/she reacted and what steps were taken to settle the situation or ask him/her about their performance under a tight deadline.

5.4 Psychometric & Ability Tests

Another common practice that some organizations choose is personality tests that measure the personality characteristics such as feelings, motivations, attitudes, emotional states that could be related to job performance. However, these tests constitute a controversial topic for some, even though they have been examined and assessed (Chan 2005). The biggest concern, according to Naglieri (2004), is "proper identification of an applicant" who responds to questions in a dishonest way to become desirable for the vacancy, which comes down to ethical concerns. Therefore, "training and experience may have a greater impact on job performance than personality traits" (Piotrowski & Armstrong, 2006; Millmore, 2003) and have become the preferable selection tool.

5.5 Bootcamps

Bootcamps are organized by organizations to mass hire candidates by providing prior training in specific skills. Organizations announce their openings either on their websites or on social media accounts where candidates can easily apply. The target audience is typically senior-year university students or graduate students seeking employment or training in a specific technology. Upon the completion of the bootcamp, recruiters and bootcamp trainers decide which candidates have displayed an understanding of the technology, review their competence and potential, and decide whether to proceed with hiring them. This way, by creating bootcamps, recruiters, along with the trainers' feedback, can instantly eliminate poor performers prior to hiring them. Hence the organization is fully aware of whom to proceed with and whom to eliminate. Right after their selection, candidates not only have been trained in the specific skillset, but they are ready to work on projects.

This type of recruitment is very effective because organizations can mass hire by just making the opening available on their website and social media platforms. In addition, another strategy that organizations use to attract talent is to share the succession rates of their bootcamps on their social media. For instance, they share the hire rate of candidates that they hired upon the bootcamp's completion on LinkedIn and Instagram and encourage job seekers to give it a shot. Deloitte Greece is a great example of a firm that organizes those bootcamps and constantly shares the hire rate of the participants. According to the firm's most recent Instagram post, 80 percent of their Salesforce Bootcamp participants were hired. This is a very high succession rate that guarantees future successions.

Chapter 6: The economic and sociopolitical environment of Greece

6.1 Economic Development

According to the United Nations country classification (2020), Greece is considered a developed country with a high ranking on the Human Development index, along with a high standard of living since most of its citizens enjoy a free and healthy life in a secure environment. Nonetheless, the Greek economy has suffered from high levels of political and economic corruption for an extended period of time. This resulted in rising unemployment levels, tax evasion, brain drain, freezes in foreign investments, inhibitions in economic growth, lack of morality and the distortion of a legitimate state. A landmark for the future of the Greek economy was the 2004 Olympic Games, that took place in Athens, during which the country was acclaimed globally for such an achievement. This event marked and influenced the Greek economy in many ways and perhaps shaped the future of the country's economic development. For instance, building the sporting facilities entailed research and development for their effective implementation. In the meantime, projects that had started prior to the Games were accelerated and completed in time for the opening of the Games (Zonzilos, Demian, Papadakis, Paratsiokas et al., 2015). Athens, being the country's capital and a metropolitan hub, has always benefited from developments in infrastructure, or any projects in general in comparison with the rest of the country. The concept behind creating a modernized and well-put capital would attract more tourists, not just for the Olympic Games, but even after the completion of the sporting events. Hence the transformed city would be able to produce a significant increase in revenues. Besides that, the projects that were completed not only helped the economy, but also generated various job opportunities, enabled a more modern and efficient daily life for the citizens of Athens and elevated the look of a sophisticated ancient city to a contemporary and wondrous one. Without a doubt, the funds allocated were enormous and the country was placed later under fiscal monitoring. In particular, the country faced a 7.7 percent deficit in 2009 and unemployment reached 50 percent (Matsaganis, 2013). The next day, the Greek economy was still unclear. As a result, the public sector downsized, many closures took place, cuts in public expenditures and many mergers of public organizations took place. The country faced such hardships that the International Monetary Fund and the EU

provided Greece with funds in the form of loans to help repair its debt. The economic crisis has had a profound social impact on peoples' lives. The people of Greece suffered through cutbacks in social welfare, health care and education (Georgiopoulos and Maltezou, 2013). Furthermore, insecure employment relationships and wage cuts increased the country's suicide and depression rates (Euro Health Net, 2011). The situation also impacted universities. Many academics either retired early or migrated to other countries to practice their profession.

Today, in the year 2022, under the new government, foreign investments have bloomed in the cities of Athens and Thessaloniki. Such initiatives helped in strengthening business growth, the creation of job opportunities and, overall, set a promising environment for future investments. Surprisingly, the Greek economy was already slowly healing before the pandemic, but had a significant impact on the local economy. Specifically, “the tourism sector, which accounts for over 20% of Greek GDP and is concentrated in the summer months, suffered from a steep fall in tourist arrivals from abroad” (Odendahl and Mouzakis, 2021). As a result, the Greek Prime Minister, while addressing the parliamentary meeting, said that the country will not suffer from another lockdown because economy is unable to sustain the financial burden that will be caused. Hence, he imposed graded restrictions to the unvaccinated population in order to better manager this health crisis.

6.2 Labor Law and Regulations

As society progresses, new laws are passed to reflect the current societal needs to ensure general safety. Labor laws and regulations are in place to define the rights and obligations of workers and employees. More specifically, the European Union law covers two main areas: working conditions, which include working hours, part-time and fixed term work and posting of workers; and informing and consulting workers about collective redundancies and transfers of companies (European Commission). The policies in place aim to achieve the following: high employment, workers' protection, improve living and working conditions and lastly, protect social cohesion. In countries like Sweden and Germany, employment legislation favors and protects the rights of employees in comparison to other countries where the law is usually in favor of firms.

This past June, Greece passed major reforms in employment legislation under Law 4808/202. More specifically, the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs introduced a new framework for labor laws that aim to reflect the current way of living. In his speech, he mentioned: “the core

of the bill goes back to 1982. In 1982 the Internet, let alone teleworking, was a distant dream”. The need to upgrade the previous employment legislation was urgent. The new framework covers the following areas: “1. Measures and Regulations against Violence and Harassment in the workplace, 2.Special leave entitlement and flexible working arrangements for parents and careers, 3.Individual Labor Law provisions: Working Time, 4.General Legal Framework on Termination, 5.Provisions on Telework and Other Contemporary Types of Work, 6. Provisions relating to the “Eganni II” Information System, 7. Collective Labor Law Provisions and 8.Establishment of the “Labor Inspectorate” as an Independent Authority” (Industrial Relations and Labor Law). These changes aim to modernize the domestic employment law in accordance with the new economic, social, and technological advances and increase the competitiveness of Greek firms (Industrial Relations and Labor Law).

6.2.1 Employment Conditions

Since the beginning of the financial crisis (2008), unemployment rates have increased drastically, private consumption has reduced, and employment conditions have changed dramatically. More specifically, the unemployment rate in 2012 was 24.2%, affecting mostly graduate students. According to Europa’s report, “During 2010-2012, the government instituted several important reforms in the field of employment and social affairs, especially in the areas of employment protection and wage setting”. Those reforms resulted in the following changes: reduction in the minimum wage, severance pay, commercial shop opening hours, temporary work and so forth (Karantinos 2013, p.6). As expected, many employees were fired or remained in their positions, but suffered significant salary reductions.

Moreover, as Karantinos mentions in his report, a statistical report published by the Hellenic Statistical Authority in 2013 (ELSTAT) underlines that women suffered the most, with a higher unemployment rate compared to men, and was ranked second in the second in the list of young adults between 15-24 years of age. Not only Greek citizens were affected by the crisis, but also immigrants suffered due to its effects. Mostly unskilled or manual workers in construction and the tourism sector or employed in the field of personal services.

It can be concluded that the Greek economy faced two major challenges: first being the need for economic recovery that would consequently create job opportunities, and second being one policy recovery that would make jobs more attractive.

6.3 Education and Training Systems

Education is of imperative importance in Greek culture. Parents place considerable emphasis on their children's education since it immediately impacts their chances of obtaining an academic education within the local university system. Education in Greece is divided into three divisions: primary, secondary and tertiary, following the university (AEI) or Institutes of Vocational Training (IEK). Compulsory education lasts nine years from the age of seven to fifteen, which includes primary education and lower secondary education. If the pupil decides to continue with education, his/her has the option of joining a regular high school or a Technical Vocational School that provides vocational education and training. In the first year of high school, all students share the same curriculum. However, in the second year, they must choose a specific pathway (sciences, arts, or technology) depending on their interests (Vretakou, Rousseas, 2003). At the end of the third year, the students participate in country-wide examinations known as "Panhellenic Exams" which will determine their entry to a university. The preparation for the year-end exams is intense, and in order for students to succeed, usually, they attend private tutorial schools or lessons after school.

Since the exams are so challenging, students have very little chance of passing them if they do not take part in extra schooling. This results in the students' great distress since their future depends on the "Panhellenic Exams". Nonetheless, there is a percentage of students that decides not to take the end year examination and either attend private institutions in their city or study abroad. According to the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 37,484 Greek students, or 0.34 percent of the total population, were enrolled in foreign higher education institutes in 2017. Studying abroad can be very costly, but usually scholarships are offered to high achievers. It must be noted that a very small percentage of graduate students decide to return to Greece upon graduation since there are a lot more opportunities abroad. Due to the high unemployment rate, Greek graduate students are very hesitant to return and seek a job. Even if they find a job of their interest, Greek salaries are so much below market value, which makes it extremely difficult to sustain themselves. For this reason, Greek graduates who have studied abroad are better off to begin and or continue their professional careers abroad, gaining work experience and being compensated accordingly.

During the 1950s, a new phenomenon, “brain drain”, made its appearance and has definitely increased since the beginning of the economic crisis. As Brezis and Soueri (2012, p.2) highlight: “the brain drain theory describes the decision of the individual when he has already acquired some human capital in his country, and then decides to move”. Without a doubt, a large number of educated individuals coming from different backgrounds and professions left the country seeking better social and working conditions (Ifanti 2014, p.211). Brain drain has caused damage to many countries like Greece to lose their human capital when they need it the most during and after an economic recession. It can be concluded that the economic situation, lack of opportunities, corruption, low wages, and nepotism are the driving factors that force educated, and qualified individuals migrate to more developed countries. Nevertheless, the government needs to better the working conditions and employment opportunities, increase the salaries to freeze the outflow of talent.

6.4 The traditional model of the Greek Public Sector

As Spanou mentions (2008), part of the problem in Greece in general and then narrowed down to the recruitment system is the nature of a Napoleonic state and the slow transition to New Public Administration. Changes occurred for two reasons: 1. due to the "undisputable changes of its wider social and economic environment" and 2. "the direction of change" (Spanou, 2008). During the 1980s and 1990s, many western countries undertook reforms also known as "New Public Management" (NPM). One could say that NPM was founded to replace old-fashioned administrative and public sector administrative models to reflect the new, whether that meant government, society, or both (Hood 1991, Wright 1994; Lane, 2000). In a way, NPM was born to guide the direction of reforms and inspire those states that were resisting reforms. These states are also known as Napoleonic. Furthermore, the author explains that a significant gap exists between formal and informal aspects of institutional operation and that the overwhelming presence of party-political competition and “the weakness of social and economic pressure has allowed the survival of political patronage and prevented the shaping of a professional and independent civil service organization, such as represented by the Weberian conception of bureaucracy” (Spanou, 2008). In the modern administrative reality, the bigger concern is the satisfaction of certain factors, such as: timing and cost of goods and services. Today’s HRM of public administration cannot move forward without technology and all the necessary means of communication. If those are excluded, citizens

will not be able to receive high-quality services (Ραμματά, 2011). It can be concluded that Greece does not really differ from a Napoleonic state, but rather there are many similarities. At first glance, besides the static nature of the state, Greece was open for change. However, the country's specific socio-political dynamics explain the resistance.

Statism is a major characteristic of Greek political culture, not only as practice and ideology but also as a fundamental social expectation. In addition, excessive bureaucracy, and corruption contrast with the perception of civil servants who enjoy the security it offers. To be more specific, in 1981, Greece experienced a new political era that many blame for its wrongdoings. The socialist party took power and brought change in two aspects: 1. "interrupted the quasi monopoly or right-wing government since the end of the Second World War" 2. "It was the first test for the consolidation of democracy after seven years of dictatorship" (Spanou, 2008). The new government's public expenditure rose and most of the initiatives taken were against the NPM. Thus, instead of reducing the public sector, it was nationalized in an effort to make it healthier. Not only that, while other countries cut down on their welfare programmes, Greece developed policies without having the necessary resources. Consequently, sizeable budgetary obligations (Tatsos, 1993) had to be dealt with later. Nevertheless, reforms did not substantially transform the Greek model but rather Greece paved its own trajectory. All of this points to, as the author states, a "distinctive reform path" in Greece. The reforms have taken two opposite directions: "on the one hand certain reforms have attempted to strengthen central control (personnel recruitment, inspection and control bodies) and to increase bureaucratic accountability (citizen's rights, independent authorities, improvement of service to citizens); on the other hand, other reforms have tried to loosen central state control on local government, the economy and the unions" (Spanou, 2008). The first type of reforms provided "remedies to the old challenges of the Greek stare tradition, political patronage and their repercussions on the political administrative system" and the second type aimed at upgrading "the administrative model in terms of organizational features and context requirements" (Spanou, 2008).

The implementation of Human Resources Management principles in the Greek public sector was to be displaced by the traditional model of management of personnel. HRM in the Greek public sector was born when the sector itself changed its culture and ideologies based on the idea of effectiveness. The adoption of HRM in the public sector coincided with ongoing efforts to revamp and reform the public sector. To achieve that, proper and effective HRM practices should be

implemented that would result in greater public interest. For this reason, proper HRM must exist throughout the various stages of HR, such as attraction, selection, development, strength, performance, compensation and recognition (Ραμματά, 2011). The implementation of the New Public Management then could help develop the possibility of advanced management and a more flexible approach to recruitment, selection, retention, development, and performance of civil servants (Osborne, 2006).

The traditional model and nature of the public sector depends on bureaucracy and in Weber's theory of bureaucracy. Furthermore, the theory states that there are six principles of bureaucracy, including: 1. Specialization, 2. Formalized rules, 3. Hierarchical structure, 4. Well-trained employees, 5. Managerial dedication and 6. Impartiality of management. The management system underwent bureaucratization in order to ensure that the decision-making is valid, timely, formalized and abides by the rules and processes (Schneider et. al., 2005). This resulted in central agencies overseeing all decision-making regarding payroll, rulemaking, retention, and career development. Therefore, working in the public sector was based on the idea of a life-long career in the agency (Schneider et. al., 2005).

6.5 Greek Public Sector Recruitment System Analysis

According to article 101A of the Greek constitution, the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP) is the responsible party for securing transparency, publicity, objectivity, and meritocracy in civil personnel selection. As per Recruitment Law 2190/1994, ASEP has full exclusivity for all public sector recruiting and, along with the close cooperation of all the ministries, public organizations, and local authorities, the procedure is centralized. Furthermore, the personnel selection process is done in the following ways: a) by an electoral college, b) the director of the relative department, c) by a written recruitment competition, d) automatic selection based on criteria, and e) graduation from the National School of Public Administration (Spiliotopoulos and Chrysanthakis, 2013). The personnel are divided into four categories: 1. University graduates, 2. Technical Institute graduates, 3. High School graduates and elementary or junior high school graduates (Spiliotopoulos et al., 2013) and there are two groups of civil servants that exist in the Greek public sector: a) permanent employees that enjoy the privilege of high job security with indefinite contracts and b) temporary employees with fixed contracts or part-time employment. A very interesting fact that cannot be ignored in the case of the temporary employees

is their mistreatment by the Greek public sector and the laws that were in place concerning their contracts becoming permanent. To be more precise, despite the fact the Greek government passed a law prohibiting the private sector to continuously renew the temporary contracts of their employees, instead of signing a new permanent contract, the public sector employees did not enjoy the same privileges. Hence, the public sector as an employee had the power to take advantage of assign employees for specific time-period. As Σκιαδάς (2003) notes, this resulted in a hostile situation where the contractors were pressured to vote certain parties in exchange of renewing their contracts or hoping for a long-term position in the sector. This phenomenon existed and still exists as there were certain jobs or urgently needs of the agency,-ies that needs to be covered. According to ASEP, higher education institutions use an Electoral College in order to select their teaching personnel. Also, it is very common to use recruitment competitions to assess the knowledge of the candidates, either orally or in writing. Another method of selection is by the head of the department or a special body. Finally, there are also cases where the person is appointed after the completion of the Military Academy and the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (Spiliotopoulos et al, 2013 Panagoloulos, 2008).

The ASEP selection process, in order to protect the principles of meritocracy, fairness, objectivity, and transparency, is highly structured and formalized. Moreover, ASEP guarantees the following:

1. All the announcements for the open vacancies as well as the results of the selection process are published on the ASEP website.
2. Candidates that meet the necessary requirements set by law are eligible for the open position.
3. Each candidate must be evaluated fairly (no matter the number of candidates applying to the position) based on specific, objective, and transparent criteria and examine the candidates' qualifications, experience, and performance on tests and exams.
4. The participants have the right to an appeal or objection and to request further information.

As mentioned above, candidates that are interested in a specific job position need to visit ASEP's website and apply (online) form with their preferences regarding the employer, the specialization, and the location preference. The application form contains all the fields that can be in a CV, for instance, contact details, education and experience background, skills and attributes related to the offered position. For permanent staff positions, ASEP implements the following

recruitment processes: 1). **Written examinations.** The examination consists of multiple questions (80-100 questions) and is adjusted depending on the specialization or written essays. In any case, the examinations are adjusted for disabled individuals and a separate priority list is for candidates who have many siblings. 2). **Evaluation of applications (CVs)** along with official documents and transcripts. The candidate needs to provide a number of degrees, foreign languages, as well as social criteria such as: large family, place of residence, underage children. 3) **Interviews** are mostly used for specific positions related to public safety and health care. The interviews are formal and structured. 4) **Practical ability tests** are given for specific technical and administrative positions and are used to evaluate specific skills. In addition, there is an option for a long-written examination for categories that evaluates the candidates' abilities and consists of a hundred multiple-choice questions on a variety of subjects that cover history, algebra, grammar, reading. The sum of the points earned is then multiplied by three and added to the candidate's score. Moving forward, the final score is the sum of all points earned by eligible candidates from: the qualifications, the results of the written examinations, the social criteria mentioned above, the results of the General Knowledge and Abilities Test, and the interview. Regarding temporary employees, the selection process is based upon objective criteria and grading systems that are defined by the recruitment law in place (asep.com).

6.6 Statute framework

Before the establishment of ASEP, a variety of Presidential Decrees were in place that identified the personnel selection, the organization responsible for planning and recruitment, the organization conducting the recruitment process, and cases that were excluded from the recruitment systems.

Statute	Personnel Selection process	Organization responsible for planning the recruitment	Organization responsible for conducting the recruitment process	Excluded from the recruitment systems
Presidential Decree 611/1977	Recruitment competitions (specific, prefectural and common)	Application of the authority or the legal entities of public law entity approval of the Minister	Min. of Presidency of the Government after recommendation of the competent body (varies depending on the type of competition) under the supervision of the CCC	Special cases depending on conditions, the elementary education staff, non-permanent staff, special categories of public servants
Law. 1320/1983	In order of priority (with emphasis on social criteria)	Joint decision of the Min. of Presidency of the Government and the competent Minister.	Department of Programming and Recruitment of Personnel of the Min. of Presidency	Specific categories of public officials (judges, diplomats, soldiers, teachers, clergy and others)

Table 1: Source Rossidis et al., 2014

Law. 1735/1987	In order of priority (emphasis on academic qualifications)	Joint decision of the Min. of Presidency of the Government and the competent Minister.	Min. Presidency of the Government	Specific categories of public officials (judges, diplomats, soldiers, teachers, clergy, artists, the House of Parliament staff, NHS staff and others)
Law. 1943/1991	Recruitment competition taking into consideration individual increments (degree grade, postgraduate qualifications, residency)	Annual recruitment planning by designated bodies (taking into consideration the opinion of trade unions). Submitting and assessing proposals to the Ministry of President and Finance	Central Competition Committee consisting of one supreme judge and 4 university professors (from the field of legal, financial, administrative and technical science)	Special categories of public officials (judges, artists, staff of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Presidency, soldiers, clerics, the House of Parliament staff, NHS staff, special advisers, staff with special nature and mission and others)
N. 2190/1994	Recruitment competition or in order of priority (mixed recruitment system)	Application of the Ministry and approval from the Ministry of Finance	Supreme council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP)	Special categories of public officials (judges, teachers, staff of the NHS, the Olympics and the TAB business, artists, staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Parliament and the Presidency, military, clergy, are directly appointed to managerial grades and others)

Table 2: Source Rossidis et al., 2014.

Since the establishment of ASEP, candidates are now assessed based on their qualifications with more meritocracy and objective criteria. Nonetheless, every country focuses on different elements during the recruitment procedures for civil servants. Having in mind how Greece's civil servants' recruitment system works, we can also examine another country in the Eurozone, Germany and see how their processes differ from Greece's.

6.7 The case of Germany

First and foremost, the principle of civil service emerged with the Basic Law of 1949. During the 19th century, the public administration was formed as we know it today. The Weimer Constitution of 1919, Article 130, enabled civil servants to have political views. However, they were servants of society and not to the party. Of course, during the war, freedoms and rights were restricted. Just a few years after the end of the second WWII, the need for order and reconstruction of the government was highly needed. Every German citizen had the right and a fair chance to participate in the procedures required for employment in the public sector. According to the Federal Republic of Germany (2006), employees can be divided into four categories: administrative, executive, clerical, and sub-clerical service. In Germany's case, there is no central body but rather each authority/ministry applies its own procedures for the selection process. Thus, the agencies and bodies are responsible for carrying out the personnel selection. Once the announcement of the

vacancy begins, the candidates need to succeed in the exam (Chandler 2003). Each country, therefore, follows its own recruitment processes.

For example, in Sweden, “the hiring criteria for the positions concerning central government are defined by the Constitution” (competitive analysis). The system in Sweden is based solely on candidates’ abilities and meritocracy. And other countries either have similar cases to Greece, Germany, or Sweden. Whatever the case may be, it could be said that the recruitment systems are divided into two categories: centralized and decentralized but this does not mean that a country cannot have a mix of both. For example, in Greece, civil servants' recruitment is based on a body or a committee and the system is centralized, whereas in Lithuania and the United Kingdom, the recruitment systems are decentralized.

It should be mentioned that with the technological advancements, several countries prefer to handle the recruitment procedures electronically, and during the COVID era, many processes were “forced” to be done online.

In the Greek case, public administrations carry out the recruitment process, assessing the candidate’s qualifications. As Sullivan mentioned, (2002) (as stated in Goldfinch and Wallis, 2009), this system may exclude candidates who do not possess the required qualifications but rather have performed very well in past positions. Therefore, candidates must be evaluated based on the qualifications that they have and that are suitable for the position, not so much on formal qualifications. Countries like Greece and France value more education and results earned from recruitment competitions. In contrast, Sweden and the United Kingdom place more emphasis on work experience and specialize in recruitment competitions (Human Resources Management Working Party, 2004 cited by Aspridis).

6.8 The relation between the Selection Process and Corruption in the Greek public sector

Over the last decade or so, there has been an increased effort by public sector agencies to use alternative forms of employment, including greater use of consultants and contractors, as well as engagement of personnel through recruitment agencies for small term contracts. Under the Civil Servant’s Code, public agency heads are required to ensure employment decisions are merit-based. The Code contains principal regulations that civil servants must abide by (rights and duties, methods of selection, promotion process, termination, leaves, etc). Public officers are expected to make decisions about employment based on impartiality rather than favoritism and bias. Nepotism has

been the biggest problem within the public sector, where civil servants go above and beyond to benefit themselves, family members and friends usually for a type of exchange. Due to corruption and misconduct risks, unfortunately, employment practices are not followed/obeyed. These practices include anything from compensation, benefits, leave, skills and training. The Greek Ombudsman highlights all categories of potential discrimination that should not be present in the workplace and has set a common ground and guide for all agencies in the public administration. The aim of the guide is to cover all the gaps, especially with identity matters or the capacity one holds.

List of core and problematic issues within the Greek Public Administration:

1. Inadequate pre-employment screening. This includes failing to require applicants to provide information about work history, qualifications, criminal records, or conflicts of interest that could later on place the sector at risk of corruption. Consistency and fair, impartial recruitment are what should be implemented.
2. Lack of best practices, but rather practices that are vulnerable to corruption, seems to work better. Unfortunately, corruption and nepotism do not belong in any employment life cycle. Just recognizing that there is an issue is not enough. Agencies have been aware of these wrongdoings for many years now and are still taking these risks. They need to strengthen their systems by using best practices from international organizations and using the help of consultants to implement the changes.
3. Nepotism, favoritism, and conflicts of interest. The need for mechanisms in place that will stop these practices is vital. People in place need to detect and put a stop at the beginning of the recruitment process (Genikos Epitheoritis Dimosias Ergasias, 2018).
4. “Recycling” of employees that have displayed inappropriate/problematic behavior or criminal history can be a significant corruption risk.
5. Complaints that have been reported about public sector employees’ action are taken, but follow-up does not always occur. Reporting an incident is the first step, but the action taken and the follow-up are equally important in those situations. Otherwise, misconduct and corruption are still practiced.

The question I would like to answer is why does the public recruitment process fail? And the answer is, for many reasons. Employees are the greatest asset in any organization; in other words, they are the organization. Human resource management has transformed in the past twenty years, and I am

talking globally. Organizations need human capital in order to excel. The progress, development, and success of any business are linked to the performance of its employees. No matter the type of organization one thing is certain: the right person for the right job is an ingredient that works every time.

Chapter 7: Methodology / Qualitative Research

This study revolves around two nucleuses, one being international organizations and the second being the Greek public sector. What do they have in common? Recruitment of human capital. The Greek public sector has seen large leaps of improvement due to digital transformation. COVID forced governments, and, of course, in our case, the Greek government, to respond quickly and find ways to serve the citizens. Many processes have been streamlined as a result of digitalization, and citizens can now access services from the comfort of their own homes. Despite that, there are still certain areas where the sector can improve overall and keep up with the constant changes. First and foremost, the sector needs to hire employees that are ready to implement their knowledge, properly train the staff, increase efficiency, properly equip facilities, and further continue the implementation of technological advances across all services. All of the above, will contribute to a modernized public sector that will run more effectively. The aim of this paper is to shed light and provide recommendations on innovative practices in recruitment that are being practiced at an international level, as well as discuss their impact and transferability to the Greek public sector. Of course, if ever those practices are adopted in the future, they will require tremendous effort, time, and special handling from the government in order to secure their implementation and benefit the citizens. The government can actually leverage the help of a consulting firm to evolve core operations and deliver the services that citizens demand. At the end of the day, the citizens are the customers and expect high-level services.

Qualitative analysis tends to identify important issues by observing and gathering data that is non-numerical in nature. By definition, “qualitative data analysis is an iterative, reflexive process that begins as data is being collected rather than after data collection has ceased; next to field notes or interview transcripts, the qualitative analyst jots down ideas about the meaning of the text and how it might relate to other issues” (Stake, 1995). The data collected is then being analysed, to compare inter-related topics, provide suggestions, and end up with certain conclusions. This is the approach I decided to take, to conduct interviews with several international firms whose presence in Thessaloniki has grown over the past 5-10 years.

7.1 Interviews

In order to have a better understanding of the recruitment process, I conducted interviews with the respective Human Resources Departments and Senior Managers of nine multinational firms located in Thessaloniki. The interviews were chosen in order to ensure the validity of this study and provide insight into the function and importance of the HR Department.

Firm A is involved in the pharmaceutical sector, whereas firms B and C are involved in Consulting and Auditing and Firm D is a leading recruiting agency. Firm E is a global transport and logistics company and in very similar field is Firm F who is a major transportation and e-commerce services. Firm G is a manufacturer of optical components, Firm H is involved in business software development and lastly, Firm I, is known in the market for a combination of Recruiting, Risk Advisory, Marketing Solutions and Consulting.

The approach I followed for the interviews was semi-structured. Due to Covid-19 restrictions I conducted all interviews online and approximately they lasted 40-60 minutes each. After a brief introduction on my part and reassuring the HR Managers and the other professionals that the data gathered will only be used for academic purposes and no brand names will be mentioned, I began the interview process. I chose a semi-structured interview because it encourages a two-way communication, which allowed me to ask follow-up questions and understand the reason behind the answers that they provided.

A detailed version of the questions asked during the interviews are in the Appendix. The aim of the questions was to understand the different types of recruitment methods, types of interviews that prefer, and tools used by the different firms alongside with certain “trends”. Moreover, a lot of emphasis was given on the role of social media in each firm’s recruitment process and in which platform they find the most suitable candidates. In addition, went into depth about the effect of the financial crisis on the HR department and how firms were able to manage the issue. This issue is also relatable with the issue of internal and external recruitment during the financial crisis. Furthermore, in terms of employee selection, I asked HR Managers to be as thorough as they can regarding the types of interviews followed during the recruitment process as it remains the most relevant selection tool but also justify the utilization or not of pre-employment tests. As it was mentioned in the literature review, companies must be attractive to attract employees and, in our interviews, we discussed the kind of opportunities that are being offered to employees. For instance, the types of growth plans and whether internship opportunities are being offered.

7.2 Data Analysis

It is very important to highlight that in all firms, the HR Managers, Senior or Junior members of the HR team are involved in the recruitment process. To be more specific, when it comes to hiring entry level or internship positions, usually only the HR team is present in the first interview and usually in the second round, the appointed head of the department along with the HR team conducts the interview. When it comes to high-level positions, firms usually require a group interview with several people attending; one person from HR and the rest are Managers from the specific divisions, also known as Hiring Managers, who will evaluate the employee after a discussion with the Talent Acquisition team. Let's now examine the findings of the interviews that will be broken down into sections:

Section 1

In this section, we will examine the recruitment process regarding sourcing potential candidates, the recruitment tools followed by these firms and the role of social media in the process. In terms of attracting applicants, all companies use their own websites for internal and external opportunities and job boards for potential applicants. All firms, through their job board, make an initial screening of all applicants and usually set specifications as to who is suitable to apply. Firm A utilizes agencies that assist in the pre-screening phase for specific job openings. Typically, for openings that require a third foreign language in addition to English, the agency assists with screening and assessing candidates before forwarding those who meet the criteria to the recruiter(s). When it comes to positions that only require Greek and English, the Senior Recruiter oversees the whole recruitment cycle. It is no surprise that all firms use social media in the process, and, of course, the number one platform is LinkedIn. From the feedback received, LinkedIn maintains a professional image throughout all countries. LinkedIn users upload their academic background and work experience on their profile from where agencies, recruiters and in some cases, hiring managers can search for individuals' profiles and determine if they are a good fit for the position and the organization. It is important to note that no company uses newspaper ads since it's an outdated method for recruiting. Moreover, Firm B, besides LinkedIn, is also using Instagram as a means to share upcoming job openings, opportunities, and career days to attract new talent. They also share their success stories on posts and their stories create the well-known "Instagram polls" where they

try to raise awareness of the company and engage users (potential candidates). This way, a potential candidate can scroll and get acquainted with their potential employer. Another interesting fact is that firms B, C, D, E, G and I source candidates through college fairs. They visit universities around the city of Thessaloniki to introduce the firm and its needs to the students. Then, the students have the opportunity to talk to the firm recruiters, hand-in their resumes, make a good impression and get an interview. The aforementioned firms concluded that college fairs are very effective for helping the young graduates enter the workforce and get trained right after their graduation. In addition, Managers mentioned that employee referrals are quite common as a means to find new talent. This is because they already have built trust with existing employees; thus, they believe that their employees will suggest suitable candidates. Firms A, C, D and E provide a monetary incentive to their employees once the referred employees are hired by the organization. As far as outsourcing goes, firms A and F work with private agencies to help them complete their large hiring needs. As they mentioned, those agencies are costly. However, their work is very effective since they find qualified candidates in “zero” time. Finding qualified candidates, it is a rather difficult task therefore, the recruiting agencies come to play like firm I to search candidates that meet these certain qualifications. Another example of how companies recruit and meet large hiring criteria is through bootcamps. Firm B organizes bootcamps three times a year and their target audience include university students, university graduates and young workforce. The aim of the bootcamps is to “get trained, get hired” as the Senior HR Manager informed us. Applicants must go through two rounds of interviews and the ones selected can participate in the bootcamp. Candidates do not need to have any prior experience with technology; the bootcamps provide them with the opportunity to be trained and then hired full-time at the firm.

Surprisingly all firms offer internships from three to six months with the opportunity to hire the trainees full time upon the completion of the internship. Specifically, Firm B reports that “80% conclude to permanent employment”. As far as the employment state employment agencies are not used by any firm.

Section 2

Next is the selection procedure, which includes the types of interviews followed and whether pre-employment tests are part of the selection process or not. Firms: A, B, C, D, F, and I

follow semi-structured interviews with behavioral- based questions, because there is a base of questions they are required to follow. The structure, however, alters during the interviews in order to follow up with multiple questions and provide clarity to the candidate's answers. Firms H, E and G follow structured interviews and as they both mentioned, they want to leave less room for bias. In Firm H, there is one screening interview where the candidate has to reply in a five video questions and then two structured interviews follow. For the semi-structured interviews, more or less, the recruiter begins with an introduction and asks the candidate about his/her educational background and past work experience. After that, the recruiter asks behavioral-based questions or presents the candidate with a scenario where he/she must provide a solution or explain how he/she would handle the situation. This type of breakdown is usually applied to entry level positions. For example, Firm B for entry level positions follows two rounds of interviews with one screening where only a recruiter is present and in the second round (technical interview), the recruiter, managers and staff from the specific department participate. Similarly, but for senior level, manager positions and higher levels, firms A, D, F, G and I follow a semi-structured panel interview process. The same applies to firm B. On the other hand, Firm C, due to the fact that it is not only in the consulting sector but also provides recruiting services as an outsourcer, when finding candidates for the client, the firm video calls the candidate as a first-stage acquaintance and then two structured interviews follow as well as one final interview with the client. When it comes to hiring internally, Firm B follows a two-round semi-structured interview process, one with the HR department and one with the HR department and Hiring Manager. Firms E typically begins with a screening interview and proceeds with structured interviews with behavioral elements. Panel interviews are used for high-level positions. Finally, Firm H follows with a screening and then a structured interview for all levels. Firms A, B, C, H and I offer pre-employment tests, that evaluate candidates' level in foreign languages, technology-based tests like SQL and Java for developers, as well as psychometric tests.

Although there is no trial period for the candidates at any of the firms, Firm B sets a meeting with the new hires after three months of their hiring and receives feedback from the employees whether they like the position so far, or if they would rather change their position/department. Also, they receive feedback on their performance and on how they can improve. The whole recruitment and selection process for firms A, B, C, D, F, G, and I is validated by the recruiter along with the hiring manager(s) and the staff for entry level and high-level positions whereas for internships the

recruiter is the only approver. In firms E and H, only the HR department controls the recruiting and selection process based on the requirements given by the Hiring Managers.

One of the questions during the interviews was whether gamification is used in hiring instead of the standard process of “upload your resume and cover letter”. The results were quite interesting; firms A, B, E, G and H do not use Gamification yet, but they are open. As they mentioned, they are examining the possibility of using the new trend soon. Firm C has partnered with a game solution company and will soon go live with gamification in their recruitment process. Firm E is testing it internally already and will go live as they said very soon. Based on the research they have done from previous companies, Firm E finds Gamification is a very effective method, which is why they decided to utilize it. Although Firm E is not using it in their recruitment process, they are using it in internal training programs. From the positive feedback they have received, they are considering introducing it in recruitment as well. Firms F and I do not foresee using gamification.

Moving on to internal and external recruitment, all firms try to fill a position internally first and if that is not possible, they initiate external recruiting. Thus, they always examine the possibility of promotion first-whether that means a change in title or pay grade, or sometimes even both and then, if they still have to cover their needs, they use external recruiting.

For example, firms A, B and F, when they opened service centers/hubs in the city of Thessaloniki, had to use external recruitment since the volume of hiring needs was large and there was no other way to cover those needs.

Also, the fact that those hubs are run and monitored by foreign Directors and Managers (along with national Managers), means that they also have a say in the recruitment process and are fully involved as they provide the hiring needs. Furthermore, employee performance evaluations are conducted every 6 to 12 months for firms D–I.

Firms A, B and C provide three assessments throughout the year. Firm B specifically calls them “check-ins”. All of them want to measure the growth and the strengths that their employees have in order to examine potential promotions, transfers into other positions or departments, and the possibility of extra training needed to help the employees excel.

Furthermore, we discussed if the organizations offer any opportunities for further development as well as what measures are taken to eliminate incidents of selection bias.

- Firm A, since it is a multinational organization, firmly believes in its people's growth and offers various training methods, job chances, as well as assignments. They believe that through challenges and greater responsibility, individuals grow.
- Firm B, with a presence in more than 150 countries, has a very strong assignment system. Also, in their job descriptions, they highlight the importance of providing training and certifications to all employees. Even if an employee terminates his/her contract, the certification would still belong to the employee. Firm B is a Consulting, Financial Advisory, Risk Advisory, and Tax firm that trains their employees in various technologies in which they can be certified and then trains new hires on those technologies. Thus, it is a win-win situation both for the company and the employees. Also, employees have access to an internal platform called the “Learning Hub” that they can access at any moment and where they can review and participate in online courses, lectures, and webinars.
- Firms C & D as well offer training at the beginning and throughout the employee’s life cycle at the company. Firm C uses training as an incentive for promotion.
- Firm E invests heavily in the retention, wellbeing, and development of its employees. They offer an internal training platform that each employee can use to advance their skills and knowledge through a series of carefully curated programs as per department specifications. Moreover, through their training platform and KPI record, they track and identify employees’ weak, and strong points and encourage them to participate in training programs as needed. The training platform, employee KPI evaluations, and internal job boards work in conjunction to advance the skills of their employees and promote a culture of achievement, progression, and career satisfaction.
- Firm F provides growth plans and positions that are developed by each function separately and approved by Senior Management, and Human resources and organizational design teams. The company encourages applications from all areas of the globe, and people are encouraged to apply if they meet the criteria. Succession planning is also encouraged to develop future potential candidates.
- Firms G, H provide a three-month training program when employees are initially hired and based on their performance, monetary incentives are given.
- Firm I have a specific department called “Risesmart”, which offers learning and development opportunities that candidates can always access.

The next question that the interviewers had to answer was the one concerning incidents of selection bias and here are the findings:

- Firm A: Having multiple round interviews with a panel with different cultural backgrounds, creates a diverse feedback process that significantly reduces selection bias. They hire for experience and for skills and focus on giving everyone a fair shot based on their backgrounds. Firm A is a reputable employer when it comes to onboarding talented people and offering equality throughout the processes.
- Firms B: implements multiple assessments. Candidates are rated on their technical ability, which is crucial in their selection bias. Therefore, this is how they reduce selection bias. Also, the rating process offered via their technical assessment screening methods, allows them to choose candidates based on performance and knowledge.
- Firm C: takes a different approach where managers who conduct the interviews are trained about bias and based on the company's policy, those incidents are avoided.
- Firm D: The company wants to select the right person for the right position, and they do that by grading the candidate on a rubric. The recruiter has already determined which skills are essential and will look at those skills individually. If the candidate matches them, then he or she will be shortlisted. For example, as Firm D mentioned, taking into consideration the school that the candidates attended should not determine our choice. However the skills, work experience and potential should be the driving factors.
- Firm E: As mentioned by the HR Manager, "selection bias is one of the most common pitfalls a recruiter can fall into". The company strives to provide equal opportunities by standardizing the first interview process to provide a level playing field for all candidates. At later interview processes they utilize collaborative processes such as panel interviews, where several interviewers can actively participate and engage with the interviewee. Once the panel is completed, the interviewers are encouraged to share their observations and thoughts and actively discuss them in a constructive and open manner. One of the key methods that Firm E utilizes is training and guidance by experts on diversity and equality policies for all staff but particularly HR and management. The organization strictly adheres to local laws and regulations as well as internal company policies and ethics guidelines that promote fairness and prevent discrimination, not just in hiring but in all aspects of the company's day-to-day functions.

- Firm F: Depending on local laws, there is encouragement from HR to be as diverse as possible. In the application process, there are no age, sex, or race questions. In addition, they ensure their objectivity through multiple panel participants, where each interviewer presents his or her selection to the group, and this is discussed.
- Firm G: Uses a standardized process of interview to eliminate incidents like these and through the strategy that they use, they ensure fairness and objectivity.
- Firm H: Having an initial screening and number of interviews (this is determined by the level of the position) where a plethora of members from HR and management are involved helps them reduce bias.
- Firm I: Has taken serious measures concerning bias in the recruitment selection process. The firm, provides a policy handout to all employees which they have to agree if they want to become part of the company and then later on there is a required training. In addition, due to the fact and firm I is an agency they also provide the same policy handout to their clients.

Section 3

In this section of the interview, we reviewed the current recession's effects on the HR department and how the financial crisis affected the firms. Surprisingly, all firms benefited from the crisis to a large extent and did not incur significant costs. Some minor adjustments had to be made to compensation, but all of them retained their staff. As firm A mentions, the organization created multiple opportunities during the financial crisis. The organization found multiple talented individuals looking for a good opportunity, and their firm provides that. The same direction followed firm B and during the crisis, they were reported to be the first to largely invest in the local talent of Northern Greece by creating service centers that gave them the opportunity to hire and train great individuals. Firms C, D and E reported that in Greece the economic crisis was in a more intense manner than in other countries they operate in. This had, therefore, a flooded job market with experienced individuals that found themselves unemployed due to circumstances outside of their control. Their goals were to examine and take very carefully into consideration all aspects of a candidate's current situation to provide a fair assessment and opportunities without taking advantage of anyone's situation. Firm F reports that the financial crisis did not affect their

recruitment and selection processes because hiring salaries are typically adjusted to market conditions, and the company positions itself in the market at a certain desired level. Therefore, there have been salary adjustments where needed based on the external environment. Firm G faced a huge dilemma, as they explained, because they did not want to fire or extremely reduce the employees' wages. Therefore, what they did was to keep the current employee and wages and freeze their hiring for a little while. Firm H confirmed that the organization was more reluctant to hire at rates that used to be before the economic crisis and this has resulted in current employees being overworked and taking more responsibility than they should while being paid the same amount of money. Finally, firm I reported that they gave better financial results than the previous year and instead of facing difficulties, the economic crisis opened a new market direction for the company, thus they benefited from the crisis.

7.3 Discussion of findings

It is very important to mention that all firms have an HR department, something that is not very common in small and medium companies in Greece, and this makes sense because the aforementioned firms are multinational since they operate and are managed by the parent company. From the data related to the recruitment process it is no surprise that Internet and Social media platforms are necessary tools to hunt and find a talent pool. If I may say, it is the only way nowadays. Therefore, firms invest heavily in training their recruiters in what is called "Boolean Search" and "Social Media Search" for recruitment and sourcing candidates. Posting a job requisition in a newspaper is considered obsolete. Thus, none of the firms are following this approach. Furthermore, no co-operation with assessment centers was noted, but there were several firms that noted that for certain positions they do require "in-house" assessments. Another interesting fact is that firm A, which is involved in pharmaceutical and biotechnology corporations, cooperates with employment agencies despite the fact that it is a costly approach in comparison to the rest of the firms that do not use this approach.

Therefore, it comes down to the needs the organization has as well as the budget they require for their hiring needs. The most common Social Media platform that is used among all firms is LinkedIn, because it is a professional platform where they can search and contact candidates. As far as the interview process goes, it is a combination of structured, semi-structured and panel

interviews. Some companies require more than one interview, or panel interviews depending on the job level. More specifically, firms: A, B, C, D, E, F and I use behavioral-based interviews and semi-structured and semi structured interviews, while firms H and G use only structured interviews. The way that firms A, B, C, D, E, F, and I choose to interview their candidates comes to support Gusdorf's (2008) claim that "almost all organizations use behavioral interviewing at some point of the selection process". The type of interviews organizations choose is based on their hiring needs and after discussion with the HR team. Other selection tools that the interviewed firms use are pre-employment tools. For instance, Firm B requires for programming positions SQL, Python and Java testing and based on the candidate's test results as well as their interview combined, they decide whether the candidate is suitable for the position. When it comes to the selection process, it is important to keep in mind how firms choose to eliminate bias and to ensure fairness and objectivity. From the responses that they provided, it can be concluded that they hire based on a candidate's skills and give a fair shot to everyone regardless of despite their educational background and work experience. Not just that, but organizations hire for diversity. Hiring for diversity is not just a slogan; it is a smart decision. Hiring individuals from all sorts of backgrounds alters the behavior of a group's social majority as it supports new ideas and a new way of thinking since everyone has to offer something different based on their own unique experiences. Diverse teams with representatives of different genders, races and nationalities can enrich and boost the organization's success. Firm F reported that during the candidate's application process, there are no age, sex, or race questions, and this is how today's age-based candidate applications need to be.

Overall, based on the responses received, it can be concluded that firms A, B, E and F have a more analytical approach when it comes to their recruitment process by having several interviews, behavioral based ones, pre-employment tests, evaluation stages, which ultimately contributes to higher objectivity in selection. The other organizations follow a different approach without making one or the other better.

7.4 Transferability

As mentioned in the bibliographic part of this study, the optimization of efficiency, the difficulty of getting in contact with certain public services, and the lack of professionalism of the staff constitute the core issues of the Greek public sector. In addition, part of the problem in Greece in general and then narrowed down to the recruitment system is the static nature of Greece and the

slow transition to New Public Administration. Inadequate pre-employment screening, lack of best practices, nepotism, complaints, and recycling employees that have displayed inappropriate behavior is today's definition of the Greek public sector. The Greek public sector must evolve and innovate to keep up with the rapidly changing world we live in. It needs to provide more "customer-centric" services and respond effectively to the complex challenges facing our society today and in the future. If we want to create a sector, where citizens trust the public sector, then the government needs to be more inclusive, transparent, and efficient. To build more trust and achieve high efficiency, it comes down to the people you hire. All that derives from the civil servants that are hired in the first place, who are responsible for delivering the best administration possible, providing quality services, and fair and transparent governance.

Based on the literature review focusing on international organizations' recruitment practices and the research part focusing on multinational firms' recruitment practices, some suggestions and conclusions can be drawn for their impact and transferability to the Greek public sector. First and foremost, as a general rule, the sector needs to prioritize professional merit over political and personal considerations. Civil servants must be recruited only based on merit and not their connections with current civil servants. It is time for nepotism, politicization, and corruption in our country to be replaced with integrity, organizational change, and professionalism.

The current recruitment procedures fall short in terms of modernization. The Personnel selection process is one of the key functions and its effectiveness has a direct impact on the efficiency of the organization. If suitable candidates' who are recruited based on their competencies were to perform the same tasks effectively, we would not be here analyzing this matter. Nonetheless, change comes with time, effort, and willingness. The following practices can be used as a form of suggestion for improvement:

- Forecast, plan hiring needs, create job requisitions based on the hiring needs, and design clear job descriptions.
- The creation of an HR department for each agency that will cover the needs and recruit civil servants.
- Pre-screen, use assessments and multi-level interviews in the recruitment and selection process.
- Invest in the right recruiting platform to find and engage talent.
- More E-recruitment mechanisms, in particular social media platforms like LinkedIn

- Merit-based applications, competitive entry processes, assessments, and diversity.
- Select staff who demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, competency, and efficiency.
- Hire only based on qualifications, pre-approved requirements, and work experience; not based on political and personal considerations.
- Multiple levels of approval to eliminate bias, exactly how the UN proceeds with the approval steps.
- Use gamification to replace traditional methods of recruiting, speed up the recruitment process, and make it more efficient.
- Ensure that civil servants use the latest people management and recruitment technology.
- If there is a need to cover a large number of hiring needs, create bootcamps “get trained, get hired” to cover the needs and have staff ready to perform tasks.
- Use external agencies to help with the recruitment of personnel.

Creating a professional civil service requires de-politicization and higher levels of transparency throughout the recruitment processes. By adopting the practices mentioned above, the current recruitment process in the Greek public sector can improve tremendously. Investing in technology as well as in human capital will contribute to the effort. The Greek public sector is not reaching students and graduates in the way that most private companies do. This can work to their benefit since young professionals and graduates are so familiar with technology already, training them on the job itself so they can grow within the service. In addition to that, usually civil servant openings are only available on ASEP’s website. In order to reach a bigger pool of talent, the sector needs to advertise through many other channels, for instance, LinkedIn.

To even talk about transferability, we need to make one thing clear: each department needs to have a specialized HR function that will oversee the recruitment cycle, training, development, and retention of civil servants. Although ASEP is one of the most recognizable and trusted public institutions in Greece and while it meets the requirements of transparency, accountability, and meritocracy, its contribution is limited. The process itself, from the moment the candidate applies until he/she gets called for the examination, takes a very long time. It is important to mention that based only on written competitions, you cannot have a full picture of whether the person is right for the position. Examinations can still be utilized but should be factored into the evaluation criteria

of the candidate along with multiple levels of interviews to eliminate bias. ASEP is using interviews only in specific cases where the agency has to request ASEP and then conduct the interview process. This procedure has to change so that, despite the position, candidates must be interviewed for entry-level positions. Due to the high volume of candidates, ASEP could adopt a better system of interviewing candidates by collaborating with external recruiting agencies to help them eliminate and select the most suitable candidates.

Another suggestion to improve the recruitment process is the use of gamification. As research has shown, companies that have been using gamification in their recruitment process have benefited to the fullest. It is much easier to test particular skills that the company deems essential for their employees to have. They can test if the potential candidates are able to fit into the public sector environment, can stimulate the actual job performance and finally, it is an excellent tool for candidate elimination, which allows them to narrow down the search. This would also elevate and change the image of the sector since they will be implementing such a progressive and innovative recruitment practice. The games, of course, could complement or even replace the assessment stage, and based on the specific criteria (skills and competence, education background, behavioral-based questions), a game can be designed to measure certain criteria in order to be civil servant "material". The HR team and committees can receive the results instantly and move on with the recruitment process. After that, the candidates that have successfully completed the game (and won based on the set criteria) can be called for an interview with the HR team and hiring managers of the specific agency.

Interviews are the most commonly used selection tool that evaluates employees based on their work experience and potential. In my opinion, due to the fact that the civil service is bureaucratic in nature and that will never change from its core, a combination of assessment tests, a game designed to fit civil service criteria, a prescreening interview, and then a set of interviews (this depends solely on the managers) would be the best option to have a full picture of suitable employees. This way, there will be no room to even speculate that an employee enters the service without merit.

Conclusion

This study first examined the root of the problem in the Greek public sector recruitment as well as innovative practices in recruitment in selective international organizations. The analysis revealed the weaknesses of the current issues in the Greek public sector, such as: lack of professionalism, nepotism, efficiency, bureaucracy, complaints, lack of coordination, weaknesses in technological innovations, lack of employee attitudes and values towards work, along with the nature of our state. Furthermore, the selection of personnel based on a grading system does not consist of an appropriate selection method. All the above underline why today's recruitment in the public sector is so problematic. Instead of having a combination of assessments and multiple interviewers where skills and competences are evaluated the same way international organizations practice their recruitment procedures, the Greek public sector can become more efficient and transparent by adopting the international organizations' recruitment model.

This study revolves around two nucleuses, one being international organizations and the second being the Greek public sector. Also, the study analyzed some innovative practices that intergovernmental organizations and multinational firms are following as well as their effectiveness. Some suggestions were made on how the sector can switch and adopt new practices and how they can benefit from them. The organizations mentioned in the literature review as well as the organizations interviewed are very reputable and successful. Thus, based on that, I believe that if the public sector recognizes the root of the problem and creates a viable plan to re-construct the current recruitment procedures based on the innovative practices used by reputable international organizations, then a larger pool of competent employees will be hired and join the service. When the best are recruited, then the image, reputation and efficiency of the organization change. This process requires time, collective effort, and the utilization of modern technology that will support the workflow and will overall elevate the image of the Greek public sector.

Appendix

Thesis topic: “Innovative practices of recruitment of personnel in international organizations: impact and transfer of knowledge into the Greek Public Sector”.

This study will attempt to provide suggestions to the recruitment methods that could be used in the Greek Public Sector to improve, use best practices, and hire competent employees.

There is no right or wrong answer(s) if you answer honestly. The results will be analyzed for academic purposes.

The data collected **will remain confidential** and used solely for academic purposes. Your participation will be anonymous.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this!

Recruitment and selection Interview

1. How do you find potential applicants that are qualified? - (Internet, referrals, employment agencies etc.)
2. If the candidates lack of skills, do you hire based on personality?
3. Can you describe the current recruitment process operating in your company/organization?
Is there a specific method?
4. What is the role of social media in your current recruitment process? In what stage of the recruitment process is it applicable exactly and how?
5. Which type of social media do you find useful and why?
6. What is the role of the State or private employment agencies in the recruitment process?
7. Does the company/organization encounter any difficulties in obtaining human resources according to the needs of the job?
8. What type of interview does the company/organization follow? (Structured, semi-structured? behavioral based? panel? screening interview? **Why?**
9. Have you thought of using Gamification in hiring, instead of standard process “upload your resume and cover letter”?
10. Do you use pre-employment tests as selection practice? If so, which ones?
11. Does the company/organization use internal and/or external recruitment strategies? Why?

12. Does the company/organization offer opportunities for further advance/development of employees to satisfy its future needs?
13. Which measures does the company/organization take to eliminate incidents of selection bias?
14. How do you ensure fairness and objectivity in the choices you make when hiring people?
15. How did the financial crisis affect the recruitment and selection process of your firm? What changes have you made? If so, how did you manage to retain the level of quality in the recruitment and selection process?
16. Does the company/organization use internships as means to “train and then hire” candidates that could become full time employees? If so, what is the success rate?

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