

Thesis booklet

**Personnel management measures in German banks with special
consideration of the motives and duty of care of leaders**

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Eine Makroumweltanalyse für die Handwerksbranche in Deutschland

In: Resperger, Richárd (eds.)

FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET – INNOVÁCIÓS

ÖKOSZISZTÉMÁK – DIGITÁLIS MEGOLDÁSOK : Nemzetközi

tudományos konferencia a Magyar Tudomány Ünnepe alkalmából :

PROGRAMFÜZET ÉS ELŐADÁSKIVONATOK

Sopron, Hungary : University of Sopron Press (2024) 128 p. pp. 85-85. , 1 p.

Publication:35501956 Published Core Conference paper (Abstract)

Scientific

8 Klein, Norbert

Führung auf Distanz - Herausforderungen für Führungskräfte durch die
Nutzung von Home-Office

In: Obádovics, Csilla; Resperger, Richárd; Széles, Zsuzsanna; Tóth, Balázs
István (eds.)

FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET: KIHÍVÁSOK ÉS INNOVATÍV

MEGOLDÁSOK - Nemzetközi tudományos konferencia a Magyar

Tudomány Ünnepe alkalmából

Sopron, Hungary : University of Sopron Press (2024) 821 p. pp. 473-482. ,
10 p.

DOI SOE Publicatio repozitórium

Publication:34777159 Published Core Chapter in Book (Conference paper)

Scientific

Mit Zielen agil führen: Innovative Anwendung der OKR-Methode in einer Sparkasse

In: Seyr, Bernhard (eds.)

Systemic Knowledge Management and Social Challenges Systemisches Wissensmanagement und soziale Herausforderungen

Lausanne, Switzerland : Peter Lang Verlag (2023) 164 p. p. 135

Publication:36265901 Admin approved Core Chapter in Book (Chapter) Scientific

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Hybride Arbeit: Herausforderungen für Führungskräfte

In: Seyr, Bernhard F (eds.)

Aktuelle Herausforderungen im Wissensmanagement : Current challenges in knowledge management

Berlin, Germany : Lang; Peter Lang Verlag; Peter Lang AG; Peter Lang GmbH; P.I.E.-Peter Lang; P. Lang Verlag; Peter Lang AG International Academic Publishers; Peter Lang GmbH - Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften (2024) 196 p. pp. 9-30. , 22 p.

Publication:36265751 Admin approved Core Chapter in Book (Chapter) Scientific

4 Norbert, Klein

Wirksame Führung in Banken und Sparkassen

BANKPRAKTIKER: RECHTSICHER - REVISIONSFEST - RISIKOGERECHT 2024 : október 8. Paper: 22756 (2024)

Full text

Publication:35630779 Admin approved Core Journal Article (Review) Popular science

5 Norbert, Klein

Prüfung des Strategieprozesses p. - Paper: - (2025)

Publication:36256948 Published Core Miscellaneous (Manual, study-aid) Educational

6 Klein, Norbert

Lead agile with goals. The OKR method – application in a savings bank GAZDASÁG ÉS TÁRSADALOM 16 (34) : 4 pp. 21-46. , 26 p. (2023)

DOI REAL SOE Publicatio repozitórium Other URL

Publication:35134739 Published Core Journal Article (Article) Scientific

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1. Introduction

The banking system in Germany is a stabilizing factor for the German economy and is characterized by a division of the banking sector into three types of banks: private banks, cooperative banks, and savings banks. Banks are particularly burdened by regulatory requirements and the demographic situation. This leads to a shortage of skilled workers and leaders. In addition, leaders face legal risks arising from their duty of care towards their employees.

This research examines the impact of motivations for assuming leadership roles and the effect of leaders' duty of care on their employees. The objective of this work is to identify empirically validated findings regarding which organizational, economic, and legal measures within the **human resources policies** of German banks are suitable for attracting and retaining qualified leaders. To provide appropriate answers to this question, insights will be gained into the following topics:

- a.) Identification of the motives of leaders to take on management tasks.
- b.) Leaders' knowledge of their duty of care towards their employees and the associated legal risks,
- c.) Influence of this knowledge about the duty of care on the willingness to assume leadership tasks.

2. Research questions

To generate the desired insights, the following research questions are posed:

Overarching research question

What organizational, economic, and legal measures can individual banks take to improve the quality of staffing for management positions within their company?

Sub-research question 1: What motives predominate when leaders take on leadership roles?

Sub-research question 2: To what extent are leaders aware of their duty of care, i.e., their responsibility for the health of their employees?

Sub-research question 3: What influence does knowledge of the duty of care and thus of the responsibility for the health of their employees have on the willingness of leaders to assume leadership tasks?

Hypotheses are deliberately not formulated in advance in order to remain open-ended in the research. The aim is rather to generate hypotheses based on the research results, which can then be tested in subsequent research.

3. Procedure for the empirical investigation

The empirical research employs the method of **qualitative primary research**. In-depth **interviews** with ten executives from various German banks aim to gain insights into potentially hidden or concealed structures of meaning.

legal regulations. Quantitative research (possibly in the form of a simple survey) could be used for this purpose.

This would be the case, since no hidden meaning structures would need to be identified here.

8. Own publications

1 Norbert, Klein ; Rita, Zöllner
Human resource management measures with special consideration of the motives of skilled workers
GAZDASÁG ÉS TÁRSADALOM (2026)
Publication:37008504 Published Core Journal Article (Article) Scientific

2 Klein, Norbert

decisions, and, where applicable, a liability waiver in the executive's contract.

Here too, human resources management can contribute by providing appropriate education and information to leaders.

7.2 Further research needs

Following this research, a quantitative study to test the hypotheses would be interesting. However, it is questionable whether such a study is even possible.

Methodological possibilities exist, particularly since hidden motives, often masked by overt ones, play a role, and quantitative instruments are needed to investigate this. Therefore, further research opportunities are more likely to be qualitative, involving the formulation of hypotheses. The question then becomes to what extent these hypotheses align with the hypotheses of this research.

One could also vary the research subject (i.e., leaders). This could be done regarding the respective culture, the underlying economy, or other legal risks.

Furthermore, the question arises as to what extent different groups of people differ in their motivations. For example, one could differentiate between children, leaders, employees, and volunteers.

Given the limited experience among leaders (in German banks) with the consequences of the legal risks arising from their duty of care, a study would be helpful to assess the relevance of the corresponding

The in-depth interviews are based on a guideline, which serves as a memory aid to ensure that no essential questions are overlooked. The guideline is tested for suitability in a pretest.

The selection of the persons to be interviewed is based on **theoretical sampling**, as only relevant persons are to be interviewed and the interviews are stopped once sufficient saturation has been reached.

The in-depth interviews are evaluated using **summarizing qualitative content analysis according to Mayring**, using the QCAmap application.

The concepts resulting from the content analysis for the ten interviewees are examined for supra-individual commonalities and form the basis for an **empirically grounded typology**.

4. Research results

The qualitative content analysis yielded the following main categories for **research question 1** regarding the motivation to assume leadership roles: belonging, work environment, personal development, and status. The reasons for taking on leadership roles in a bank are highly individual. All participants identified with all main categories, but to varying degrees and intensities.

The (sub)categories reveal that the greatest motivation stems from employee development, recognition and appreciation associated with the position and tasks, influence and success, as well as personal advancement. However, the specific motivational priorities vary among the participants.

A key finding of this research is a discrepancy between self-perceived motives for holding a leadership position and the reasons identified. This discrepancy became particularly apparent after distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic motives, which in some cases only became clearly recognizable within the framework of the typology. Four participants exhibit predominantly intrinsic motivation, while three are primarily extrinsically motivated. Three participants are not fully aware of their own motives. These three consider themselves intrinsically motivated, even though extrinsic motivators predominate. The main categories of working conditions, formal knowledge, health, and lack of knowledge regarding **research question 2** (knowledge of the duty of care) reveal a heterogeneous level of knowledge among the participants. While all participants are familiar with the concept of the duty of care, they assign it different meanings and emphases. The categories of mental health, supervision, and occupational safety stand out. Five participants focus on the human-centered aspect of mental health, while three participants (with multiple responses each) emphasize the formal aspects of supervision and occupational safety. It is noteworthy that six participants, despite being familiar with the topic, have not yet engaged with it.

The main categories for **research question 3** (influence of knowledge about duty of care and its associated consequences on motivation) are experiences and influence on motivation. While experiences in the assigned categories show a balanced picture, the influence on motivation is predominantly such that the new knowledge did not

Responsibility

Recommendation 13:

Promoting employee health is a collaborative effort involving both human resources management and leadership. It's crucial to consider health holistically in the workplace. This includes both (ergonomic) working conditions and the mental health of employees. Specific measures could include evaluating work environments, collaborating with occupational health services, and providing and promoting health programs.

In particular, human resources management should provide training to leaders about their options and responsibilities regarding the health of employees in their credit institution.

Recommendation 14:

The study revealed that the surveyed leaders have not yet thoroughly examined their duty of care. Human resources management must explain this duty of care to leaders, raise their awareness of it, and inform them about the potential legal risks and consequences. This can be done, for example, through regular training sessions or briefings.

Recommendation 15:

Executives can protect themselves from liability risks in various ways. Comprehensive protection includes diligent business management, taking out directors' and officers' (D&O) liability insurance, compliance with all legal obligations, thorough documentation of

Recommendation 11:

A bank's human resources department can foster appreciation and recognition by cultivating a culture where successes are acknowledged through expressions of gratitude. Crucially, this appreciation must be authentic and consistently practiced. An atmosphere and culture of appreciation and recognition can be fostered by promoting appreciation within the management team, by senior management setting a positive example of appreciative recognition, and by leaders actively seeking and receiving recognition from their team members. These measures increase the recognition and appreciation of the leader and also have a positive effect on the teams, as the leader promotes this culture himself in this way.

Recommendation 12:

The ability to create a motivating and positive team culture lies in the hands of the respective leader. This culture arises from actively shaping and fostering open, trusting relationships, clear communication, shared goals, and regular appreciation. It is important to create an environment in which team members feel comfortable, can contribute their ideas, and work together to find solutions.

Concrete measures for this could include regular meetings where information is openly exchanged and team members can express their opinions and concerns. Team members can also be involved in decision-making processes. It is important to ensure the targeted use of communication tools.

change the motivational state of any of the participants. Nevertheless, all participants gained new insights. Nine participants will adjust their behavior in some aspects in the future, for example, by being more attentive. Three participants were given pause for thought by the new knowledge. No participant considered relinquishing their leadership position. The typology developed from the qualitative content analysis led to the identification of three types. Type 1 comprises four participants, who are characterized by predominantly extrinsic motivation. They are also aware of this extrinsic motivation. They are unconcerned about dealing with the risks associated with the responsibility of duty of care. Three participants are assigned to Type 2. Here, intrinsic motivation predominates, and the participants are also aware of this motivation. Their willingness to take risks when dealing with the responsibilities arising from their duty of care is high. Three test subjects also fall into Type 3. This type is predominantly extrinsically motivated; this motivation is not consciously recognized. They exhibit a higher risk tolerance regarding the handling of risks arising from their duty of care.

5. New scientific findings

The following hypotheses can be generated from the results of the present research:

Hypothesis 1: A leader who is predominantly extrinsically motivated and aware of this is more willing to take on responsibility than a leader who is predominantly extrinsically motivated and unaware of this.

Hypothesis 2: Predominantly intrinsically motivated leaders are characterized by a high willingness to assume responsibility.

6. Merging into one model

The findings presented can be summarized in a model that systematizes the motivation-based responsibility of leaders:

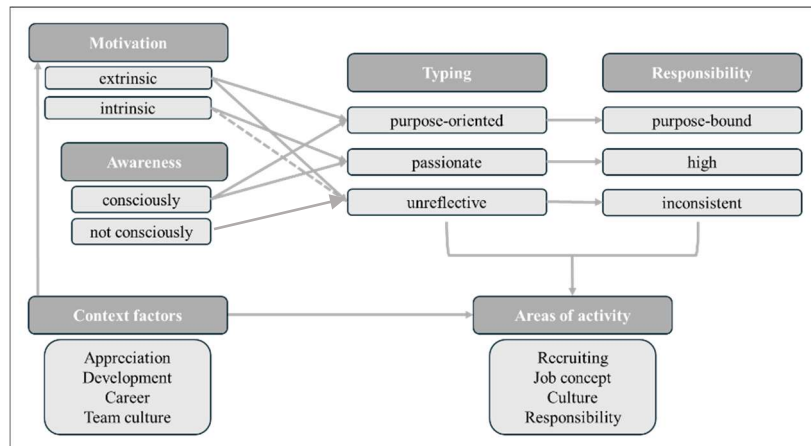


Figure 1: Model of motivation-based leadership responsibility

Source: own illustration

7. Recommendations and further research needs

7.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings presented, recommendations for action can be derived – particularly in light of the overall research question regarding measures for human resource management – for the areas of recruiting, job concept, culture and responsibility:

Culture

Recommendation 9:

Both HR leaders and applicants should overcome their reluctance to openly discuss motivations. The interviews conducted revealed that participants initially found it difficult to speak openly about (especially extrinsic) motives. Furthermore, some motives were hidden and could only be identified through projection questions. However, as the interview progressed and during the communicative validation phase, it became clear that openly addressing the topic was helpful. It was shown that leaders then reflected on their own motivations and were surprisingly able to speak openly about even hidden motives. Therefore, in job interviews, specific questions about motivation should be asked within a positive atmosphere.

Recommendation 10:

The study showed that the design of the work environment has a motivating effect on both existing and new leaders. This includes, for example, good communication with the leader's superior and peers. Furthermore, a culture of appreciation and recognition has a motivating effect, as does the creation of development opportunities for the leader and their employees. The motivator of teamwork can also be considered by facilitating team activities such as team training.

mentoring and coaching programs. It is important to prepare leaders for new challenges and increase their career opportunities (within the bank).

Concrete measures could include, for example, further training, rotation programs, career paths and planning, promoting their self-organization, etc.

Recommendation 8:

A strategic incentive system is also a personnel management tool that specifically aims to align the long-term behaviour of leaders with the company strategy. It combines monetary and non-monetary measures for motivation and performance management.

The incentive options available to the bank and the human resources department can be divided into two areas.

Monetary incentives include fixed salary, performance-related bonuses, and commissions. Furthermore, long-term elements such as stock options and profit sharing can be used.

Non-monetary incentives, such as further development, career opportunities, job content, work environment, appreciation or corporate culture, also have a lasting effect on motivation.

Successful incentive systems must be strategy-compliant, transparent, fair, and adaptable.

Their effectiveness depends on a clear strategic direction, a well-thought-out combination of incentives, and a values-oriented corporate culture.

Recruiting

Recommendation 1:

Human resources leaders in banks who have to fill management positions should consider in their recruiting processes the fact that the motives listed in application letters as well as the reasons given in job interviews for the interest in the position to be filled are in many cases not the actual motives of the applicants.

Therefore, for example, when investigating the reasons for applying for a management position during an interview, hidden motives should be identified and discussed directly using projection questions.

Recommendation 2:

The provided typology can be used to easily assess the motivational situations of applicants for leadership positions. This typology can therefore be incorporated into the application process. Those leaders who are unaware of their extrinsic motivation can be unconsciously bound by extrinsic incentives.

But even those types who show a clear tendency towards intrinsic or extrinsic motivation can be more accurately identified and recruited or retained for a position in the bank with suitable offers.

Recommendation 3:

Another overarching measure is increasing the bank's attractiveness as an employer. To enhance this, a holistic strategy must be developed

that operates on various levels. This includes several previously mentioned motivators, such as an attractive incentive system, an appreciative corporate culture, development opportunities, and an authentic employer brand. This authentic employer brand is crucial because it helps companies attract and retain talent and applicants, increasing their competitiveness in recruiting and thus securing the bank's long-term success in personnel matters. The employer brand is a strategic advantage in the competition for qualified specialists and leaders and should positively influence the perception of the company as an employer.

Job concept

Recommendation 4:

When creating job profiles for open management positions, specific motivations can be assigned to the roles. For this purpose, concrete motivators that have emerged from the categorization of this work can be used. The job requirements can be linked to motivating factors. For example, motivators such as the drive to shape the role, the motivation to achieve, and the ability to work in a team can be directly incorporated into the job description.

Recommendation 5:

Since employee development has a motivating function for some leaders, methodological tools for employee development could be

provided to them. An additional benefit is the potential for increased employee motivation. Such tools could include, for example, employee appraisals, coaching, mentoring, feedback, or team building. These tools can then be taught to leaders as part of leadership training or coaching programs.

To this end, leaders could be provided with the financial and methodological resources to strengthen employee development for their staff. Methodological tools would include, for example, individual development discussions, coaching (by the leader and/or external providers), training and further education, etc.

Recommendation 6:

To enable leaders to exert influence and achieve success, it is crucial to create a combination of effective communication, clear objectives, employee motivation, and trust-building. Furthermore, leaders should be able to serve as role models, provide constructive feedback, and foster a positive corporate culture. A concrete measure is establishing a normative framework for banking operations by developing and communicating the bank's vision, mission, and values, and, based on these, its corporate strategy and objectives. Building upon this foundation, leaders can then measure their contribution, influence, and success and align them with the company's goals.

Recommendation 7:

A bank can foster the advancement of its leaders by investing in their development. Furthermore, it can outline clear career paths and offer