

Call for Papers

Human Resource Management of a Highly Qualified External Workforce

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Over the last two decades, management and organization scholars have paid consistent attention to the concepts of contingent work and boundaryless careers. This reflects the growing relevance of contingent work in practice. In particular, knowledge intensive firms in dynamic industries are increasingly relying on an external contingent workforce, i.e. contractors, freelancers, temporary workers, and employees of service firms. A growing proportion of this external workforce is highly qualified. Against the background of these developments, we can even observe the emergence of a new industry that provides firms with an external workforce and manages it for them.

It is widely accepted in human resource management research that human resource strategy and practices need to be adapted to different types of workforce in order to be successful. Therefore, one can argue that specific human resource management practices and strategies should be deployed for an external workforce. Human resource practitioners are also increasingly recognizing the relevance of implementing specific human resource practices for external workforces. However, there is still little research on the phenomenon of a qualified external workforce, or the theoretical and managerial challenges for human resource management that result from it.

The objective of this special issue is to enhance our knowledge about a highly qualified external workforce from a human resource perspective. Therefore we want to draw together scholars who are working at the forefront of this research domain. We invite empirical, conceptual, and theoretical papers that make a clear contribution to the outlined area of research. Our aim is to incorporate different levels of analysis, ranging from individual to organizational issues, as well as different perspectives, such as from the fields of management and psychology. Prospective papers may be directed at, but are not restricted to, the following questions:

- What are the conceptual and theoretical differences and similarities between human resource management for internal and external workforces? How are these differences reflected in human resource practices?
- Should firms try to integrate the knowledge of an external workforce? How can the internal and external workforce share implicit and explicit knowledge? Do firms become dependent on the external workforce when deploying them in core processes?
- What do we know about the human resource management of mixed internal-external teams? How can human resource practices support the teambuilding phases for mixed teams? What psychological phenomena are important in the cooperation between internal and external workers?

- How does being part of an external workforce affect individual work-life integration, commitment, job satisfaction, well-being, and motivation? Which additional psychological (e.g. coping strategies to deal with stress, perceived self-efficacy) and social resources (e.g. networks) enable external workers to live a satisfactory life? What is the role of age, especially with regard to older highly qualified workers, both at the individual and organizational level?
- Under which circumstances should firms invest in firm-specific or more general training for external workers? How can external workers manage their own employability and life-long learning? Is it possible to identify specific qualification strategies for external workers?
- What are the consequences of an external workforce for the institutional organization of human resource management? How can human resource managers collaborate with internal partners, e.g. procurement departments, or external partners, e.g. service providers? Could this trigger new organizational forms of human resource management?

Submissions

The submission process is competitive. Full papers are expected to be written in English. The deadline for the full papers is August, 31st 2011. The papers will undergo a double-blind review process. The authors will receive feedback by December, 31st 2011. Finalized papers are due by May, 31st 2012. Submitted papers must represent original work that is unpublished and not currently submitted or under review for possible publication in other journals. Accepted papers will be published in a special issue of *Zeitschrift für Betriebswirtschaft*, Volume 83, No. 1 in 2013. Details about preparing and submitting the papers are available at the homepage of the *Zeitschrift für Betriebswirtschaft*: <http://www.zfb-online.de/index.php?do=ah>. Please submit papers exclusively via Manuscript Central: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/zfb>.

For any requests please contact us by E-Mail:

Stephan Kaiser, Professor of Human Resource Management and Organization, Universität der Bundeswehr München, Germany. E-Mail: Stephan.Kaiser@unibw.de

Stefan Süß, Professor of Business Administration, in particular Organization and Human Resource Management, Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Germany. E-Mail: Stefan.Suess@uni-duesseldorf.de