

7. СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ БИЗНЕС-УПРАВЛЕНИЯ, HR-МЕНЕДЖМЕНТА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В УСЛОВИЯХ НОВОЙ ЭКОНОМИКИ

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I. Burlyka

School of Business of BSU, Minsk, Belarus, ivan.burlyka@gmail.com

HUMAN RESOURCE BUSINESS PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLE IN SERVICING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES RELATED TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS

Business partners (HR BPs) within the system of HR management are known to cover a specific field of activities related to smooth functioning of a personnel management system in large IR companies on large projects. They serve as the middlemen between the project management team (RM, DM, AM) and the project team of technical specialists in charge of various technical developing and supportive functions. They would traditionally focus on mentoring managers in developing their management styles and skills, resolving various problematic situations. Servicing technical assessments on the project is another important function of HR BPs which requires numerous soft skills and conflict management knowledge as such assessments are known to play the crucial role in professional development and growth of any IT specialist. Some very important stages in this process comprise making the final decision on how fit and prepared for the project works an IT specialist is and whether his/her expectations and professional ambitions rhyme with what the project managers think of it. The art of balancing between the interests of project management and an employee and coming to the only well-balanced and correct final decision makes the role of HR BPs both challenging and very important.

Keywords: HR-generalist, HR business partner; IT sector; large companies, IT specialist, technical assessment

И. Г. Бурлыко

Институт бизнеса БГУ, Минск, Беларусь, ivan.burlyka@gmail.com

HR-БИЗНЕС-ПАРТНЕРЫ И ИХ РОЛЬ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ПРОВЕДЕНИЯ ТЕХНИЧЕСКИХ АТТЕСТАЦИЙ В СИСТЕМЕ IT

Известно, что HR-бизнес-партнеры (HR BP) в системе управления человеческими ресурсами охватывают специфическое поле деятельности компании, связанное с обеспечением бесперебойного функционирования системы управления персоналом на крупных проектах предприятия. Они выступают в роли посредников между управлением проектом (РМ, ПМ, АМ), командой специалистов (разработчиков) и группами технической поддержки на проекте. Как правило, HR BP курирует процесс адаптации недавно принятых на проект специалистов, осуществляет менторскую поддержку менеджеров с целью повышения их управленческих навыков, участвует в разрешении конфликтных ситуаций на проекте, включая оказание помощи в увольнении специалистов с проекта. Сопровождение программы технической аттестации специалистов проекта – еще одна важная функция HR BP, которая требует особых умений и навыков, включая техническую составляющую и знания по управлению конфликтными ситуациями, поскольку текущая техническая аттестация играет очень важную роль в профессиональном росте специалиста. Именно данная аттестация делает вывод о том, насколько специалист отвечает техническим требованиям проектных работ и/или степень ожидания продвижения на проекте

соответствует реальному уровню экспертизы разработчика. Искусство балансирования между интересами проекта и сотрудника и принятие взвешенного объективного итогового решения и представляет самый существенный вызов в работе HR BP по сопровождению технической аттестации на проекте.

Ключевые слова: HR специалист общего профиля, HR-бизнес-партнер, ИТ-сектор, крупные компании, ИТ-специалист, техническая аттестация

Globalization of big IT business and numerous recent changes and challenges of the modern world altered the traditional patterns of IT business development, in general, and HR management systems, in particular. Recent COVID-19 epidemics and other global triggers resulted in significant movement of human resources in the IT world. According to Dave Ulrich [1], these changes and challenges “have accentuated the importance of human resource issues to help an organization succeed in the market place”. Teams of HR professionals would contribute a lot in managing and supporting the process of relocation of IT specialists to the new locations of big business. Their support in relocation logistics and adaptation of newly arrived specialists in new surroundings would require enormous energy, knowledge and skills in how to make the whole process smooth and uneventful. In the recent past, HR teams would act predominantly as service centers to develop products on request. Their traditional functions would comprise recruitment, hiring of new specialists, their onboarding and adaptation, structuring the systems of continuous training, learning, recognition, retaining of gifted specialists, organizing various teams-consolidating events etc. All these functions would traditionally be in focus of HR-generalists.

By today HR management has additionally developed into a new branch of HR management system which focus would shift to the actual delivery process with numerous accounts and projects that would require HR support. In this case it goes about large IT companies that would employ around 5K+ and more technical specialists and a definite percentage of shared services. Most of such companies operate on the global level with their offices scattered around the whole world. Besides management of numerous global HR programs (today they are also called People programs) like the ones related to Feedback, Recognition, Onboarding/Offboarding, Relocation etc., business partners working in such companies are usually assigned to large accounts where they are to work directly with senior project managers to evolve culture and strengthen partnerships so that the projects could achieve the company-desired outcomes. It is the business partner’s role to exceed providing services and move into an outcomes-driven field. According to Robert Walters [2] “IT business partners have emerged as a rapidly growing area as companies look to utilize their IT teams for more than just support functions. These professionals add value by assessing business needs and adapting technologies to maximize the effectiveness of their companies and their individual departments”. It is also worth mentioning that “with technology offerings and challenges constantly changing, it can be difficult for senior managers to understand how effective the latest innovations will help support their company’s goals” [2]. And, therefore, contemporary models utilize IT business partners to proactively estimate company’s technology needs and manage the delivery of these IT solutions.

In large companies IT business partners would typically hold regular meetings with stakeholders throughout the company to understand the specific goals of the overall business and individual departments. These professionals are to translate such needs into technology requirements for IT development. As a result of this close relationship, IT business partners also serve as the main point of contact for the technology teams. After a new technology has been successfully delivered, these professionals also become responsible for ensuring that end users understand how to use these new tools and resolve any issues they may encounter. Another important task is to relay any feedback to technology teams. Joe Romeo [3] also stresses that “business partners work with senior leaders to evolve

culture and strengthen partnerships to achieve organizational outcomes. It is the business partner's role to surpass providing services and move into an outcomes-driven field".

Mainly this particular function of HR BPs, in general, and while operating on large projects, in particular, makes them an essential supportive tool at all stages of technical assessments run in the companies. Traditionally we recognize the three major types of these assessments, i.e. the ones that are organized by the company recruiters and technical specialists prior to employment of new specialists on the projects. The aim of such assessments is to match the set of technical skills and knowledge, formulated by the candidates in their CVs and during initial recruitment meetings with the actual status of their current level of technical expertise which could be applied in dealing with numerous technical assignments upon working on specific projects.

Another type of technical assessments aims to resolve numerous challenges related to technical management of IT specialists who have become already the part of large projects and accounts. According to Rachel Pelta [4], "companies use technical assessments to see if your solution lines up with the way they want the job done. For example, the answer to your coding assessment may skip several steps because you discovered a fantastic shortcut that saves time. And while the company may be impressed you've found a timesaver, they may also think performing each step is more important". Such company-initiated technical assessments also "give the company insights into how you'll approach the core functions of the role" [2].

In some cases, such technical assessments also help answer the questions on how suitable this or that project developer is and whether he/she could continue further work on project assignments. There are cases when only such technical assessments, run by a group of independent internal and external high-level experts, can bring the project to the final decision on reasonability/possibility of continuation of employment with certain specialists.

But in the majority of cases the company needs to support continuous professional managerial and technical growth of its employees. And mainly a continuous on-going assessment process arranged by the company on the global level enables both the company management and its employees to define whether those specialists who applied for going through such assessment on their own initiative or based on the recommendations of the project managers would demonstrate the estimated technical abilities to do the job on a higher professional level and/or to be promoted to higher managerial positions. This is the third type of technical assessment which requires direct involvement of HR business partners at all stages of this process.

The team of company experts participating in the process of Assessment covers all the fields of IT-related expertise. Answering the question on how difficult it is to be an Assessment expert, Crina Rotaru [5] elaborated the idea: "Becoming an assessment expert can be a challenging yet rewarding endeavor. <.....> Excelling in this role needs meticulous preparation, including a deep understanding of the assessment process, a comprehensive grasp of the skills and attributes essential for the candidate's desired role and thorough review of the candidate's pertinent experiences and submit artifacts. It is important to not that this role extends beyond merely assessing candidates; it involves ensuring a fair and precise evaluation that aligns seamlessly with the company's requirements". This judgment speaks in favor of how professional, serious and fair the process of Assessment at large companies could be and how scrupulously experts of this process should act.

The initial steps of this form of technical assessment are as follows:

Before approval to participate in the Assessment session, an employee is and precise to primarily contact his/her HR business partner on the project who has been assigned as an HR BP Contact to their unit and who is to help the Candidates and Candidates' Representatives to get ready for the Assessment and to pass it successfully;

Then, a Candidate is to get from the assigned HR BP Contact the detailed instructions on how the Assessment process works and to also get from this HR Contact any support within the course of preparation for the Assessment, if required, and going through it.

An HR BP Contact in his/her turn is to be ready to also participate in the Assessment sessions as an Observer, and, if required, to monitor the overall atmosphere within the course of this technical interview and the attitude of experts towards the Candidate. The ultimate goal of an HR BP in this situation is to build a mutual trust of the participants' parties.

At the end of the Assessment session an HR BP is to fill out the survey and evaluate the session participants. It is essential for better understanding if the process of Assessment has met all the necessary standards and requirements and the expected objective judgment of experts would prevail. One more essential mission of an HR business partner at this stage is to help Candidate's Representatives to deliver the estimated results.

After each Assessment session the Candidate's HR BP is to evaluate the Committee Head and work of the Candidate's Representative by means of rating them against various criteria. It is also essential to conduct a retrospective evaluation of the Assessment session results with the Candidate's Representative and participate in a similar retrospective with HR BP's country Coordinator.

As the result, such Assessments are to play in most of the cases the decisive role in further professional growth and promotion of the project team specialists to higher positions in the hierarchy of the projects or even sometimes in further continuation of employment of the candidates who failed at their Assessment, an "IT Business Partner should be trying to use his/her influence to ensure their project sits at an adequate senior management level within the overall organizational structure and all the decisions made by the project managers arise from the object multilateral evaluation of Candidate's performance on the project"[6]. In general, an HR BP is to make sure the right governance frameworks are in place at the project. And the Assessment can be used as a very efficient tool in ensuring such governance frameworks.

Summing up the above, the role of an HR BP on a large project, in general, is to make sure they hire the right delivery-focused people on the project and their further professional growth and development is supported and favored by the project management team. Retention of technically gifted IT specialists becomes a must for the project, no matter how sometimes difficult it could be to retain such professionals on the project team. Technical assessments have been designed to resolve such cases/situations in a professional and objective way. IT Business Partners working on such projects are known to play a very important role. Therefore, they are to possess such soft skills as influence, relationship building, strategic thinking etc. For this purpose, large companies adopt a competency framework specific to such an IT Business Partner role which would eventually end up in employing a suitable IT Business Partner who would be able to perform all the key stakeholder/business functions on the project.

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