THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Managing Human Capital through Social Media

Edited by

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Pasquale Davide de Palma

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The Social Organization: Managing Human Capital through Social Media

▶

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Foreword

This is an important, fairly new, issue and topic that needs to be addressed by, and for, both practitioners and academics.

The topic is timely as we move to an increasingly virtual world, which has three equally important aspects. First, there is virtual work as more and more of us work virtually from home, on the move and so on. Second, members or organizations increasingly use shared virtual resources such as database and equipment, some in the cloud. Third, organizations are increasingly relating virtually to their stakeholders, customers, employees and so on.

Of course face-to-face work still goes on, as the continued survival of offices evidences, but these are increasingly places to meet rather than for solitary work.

At the moment, virtual leadership, learning and so on are done by traditional methods in this new format, but I expect that sooner or later forms specific to this medium will emerge. However, we, and the authors and contributors to this book, can only guess at what these will be.

Leadership needs to change, and is changing, to include the scientific and evidence-based approaches as well as the human aspect. The lack of the former is largely responsible for the credit crunch of a few years ago, in my opinion. There are various views on what leadership theories work best, and whether heroic, distributed or blended leadership work best. This probably varies with context, but there is a lot to be said for blended leadership, where the blend is between the heroic and the distributed. This certainly

works where the workers being led are professionals who expect a degree of autonomy.

The topic of this book is appropriate to the times. The industrial era was preceded by the agricultural, which was in turn preceded by the hunter-gatherer era. Industrialization has given way to knowledge work and the knowledge economy, which is where the topic of this book is mainly located, and where leadership makes a return in place of management. This is also giving way to "meaningfulness," which is where "presence" fits in.

The previous eras do not cease to exist. Take, for example, farming. This is largely industrialized, the only difference being that on the farm the machines go over the goods, whereas in the factory the goods go through the machines. The machines on the farm are increasingly computer controlled and the driver is likely to be using Facebook or the like as he sits on the tractor.

The authors adopt an accessible language and within a good structure at both the macro- and micro-level. The book is reasonably short, which is probably appropriate to these busy times. It deals with management in various forms, with a particular and appropriate emphasis on marketing. "Presence" is a particularly important issue which the book deals with well. This is a contentious but popular issue, as employees and others increasingly want their feelings and values considered as well as their material needs. The book is well referenced, including websites, which will help the readers to continue their study.

There is a useful section on individual employees. It also deals with the important topic of self-regulation, which is increasingly in demand. With increasing prosperity, in the main, individuals have much more choice over their work and careers. Many of these are professionals who "own" the means of production, that is, their own brains and knowledge, need a reason to align their efforts to those of a corporate enterprise. They often have the possibility of working for themselves, only needing a laptop, mobile phone, and internet connection to do so.

Reasonable attention is also paid to the important topic of learning. This does, and needs to, include individual and organizational learning. The latter is increasingly seen as critical to organizational survival and prospering. This is a complicated topic and beyond the scope of this book to cover all details. There is probably no one form of learning; it takes different forms for different purposes.

There is a useful and appropriately located section on human resource management. This is still often seen as a probably necessary overhead,

but increasingly needs to be seen as a contributor to strategic leadership and its implementation.

This is also true for leadership and its strategic role. This links to the learning organization which, despite a popular misconception, can be hierarchical as long as leaders listen upward as much as they direct downward and have information that is not distorted on the way to them, which it often is. Strategic leadership is concerned with the "upward and out" as well as the "downward and in," a tricky balance to achieve, and may be best done by a team rather than an individual.

The authors draw on other contributors in an appropriate way.

As to the future, we can look to an increasing concern with mean-ingfulness, new generations with differing expectations and concerns for feelings and values as well as material concerns. New forms of leadership are likely to emerge; although these are only assumptions, they are likely to make a big difference.

The world will continue to become increasingly globalized, while maintaining the diversity of different cultures and nations. Much of this will not be easy, but business enterprises may well provide a common ground to make these as constructive as possible.

We will probably continue to be with some form of regulated free-marketed capitalist economy, but some will disagree with this.

We will have to deal with green and ecological issues, which will not be easy and will demand international collaboration. Some argue that the free market economy is the best way to deal with this, and I for one hope this is right.

We must learn to survive and thrive as parts or larger units of survival. This gets more difficult and dangerous as it progresses.

The cold war has given way to the fight against ISIS, though there are some signs of a return to something like the cold war.

We would do better to make the ecological challenge the shared mission.

John Burgoyne,
Professor of Management Learning,
University of Lancaster.

Preface

The combination of new technology and mobile devices with the changing needs of employees represents a significant challenge for organizations. The ability to access information and applications from a laptop or from a smart phone from around the world has created an expectation of immediacy for today's workforce. Increased availability of "on-demand" tools can be a double-edged sword: the information is easily accessible, but are workers prepared to deal with these new forms of communication? Are these technologies actually a tool to improve important organizational process?

Many multinational, big-sized companies use internal instant messaging, YouTube, Twitter, and virtual classrooms to collaborate and train human resources.

It is clear that social media tools are transforming the way people work and will continue to do so in ways that only fewer decades ago could be only imagined. It is critical for Human Resource professionals to understand what these tools are used for and to assess the risks and opportunities they may present to an organization. Social media is redefining how companies innovate by connecting people and ideas in ways that have previously not been explored.

Organizations now have the ability to manage communication with external audiences around the globe that they could never reach before. It is changing the way organizations do business today. Additional benefits include the ability to enhance corporate public image, improve interactions with customers, and promote employee engagement. However, it is not without internal and external risk.

Yet, as if aligning intricate business strategy to social media objectives, evaluating leadership and employee change readiness, and guiding the entire workforce through a change are not enough, our multigenerational workforce adds yet another layer of complexity. Four generations make up today's workplace demographics for the first time in recent history and at the extremes, their working styles and understanding of each other are different and incongruent. This is evident in the workplace adoption of social media. To effectively create a social media strategy that will be adopted by employees, organizations must consider the unique perspectives and needs of the entire workforce.

The aim of this book is to shed light on how social media usage is further transforming the way organizations make sense of their identity and of their processes as well as on how they could concretely be considered a strategic factor in market competition. More specifically, by merging the literature coming from communication studies to the evidences showed by management research, the book aims to argue that social media usage could be exploited fruitfully by organizations as a competitive advantage, if properly attuned with the official organizational culture. In this vein, all contributions in the book highlight that if considered an ally to enhance the "social" nature of human capital, social media could show themselves to be very effective with reference to several aspects concurring to enhance the organizational performance: from motivating the workforce, to improving learning, to sharing knowledge, to developing new skills.

To address this goal, the book is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter by Maria Cesaria Giordano, Amelia Manuti, and Pasquale Davide de Palma, "Human Capital Reloaded: The Use of Social Media in Human Resource Management," aims at discussing the concept of human capital with reference to some of the main human resource management practices (e.g., recruiting, talent management, and marketing). The latter are reread in light with the increasing use of social media as a strategic support to several organizational actions. Therefore, the authors discuss the challenges and opportunities granted by social media use in organizations and focus on the main implications that this revolution has had for human capital theory.

In view of this, the discussion is further enriched by the second chapter, "Communicating the 'Social' Organization: Social Media and Organizational Communication," by Amelia Manuti. Here the author moves a little bit forward to discuss how social media use has radically

redesigned the ordinary practices of organizational (formal and informal) communication. Therefore, social media are described as a new class of technologies that may alter organizational dynamics in profound ways. Given this finding, the chapter attempts at explicating how and to what extent social media merge with ongoing communicative processes that occur within and constitute organizations, arguing that they may affect particular organizational processes that are of great interest to communication researchers.

Chapter 3, "Enhancing Human Capital through Social Media: Promoting Skills and Learning through Technology," by Amelia Manuti, Maria Antonietta Impedovo, and Pasquale de Palma deals with the relationship between knowledge management, social media, and organizational learning. Yet, the authors discuss the role played by social media in improving the organizational processes of knowledge creating, sharing, and managing that are basilar to an effective human capital management. Accordingly, the chapter describes social media as a strategic tool to improve those soft and self-regulatory skills (e.g., self-efficacy and self-regulated learning) that are indispensable to allow a passage from individual to "social" learning, which is a core concept for organizational efficacy.

Chapter 4, "Managing 'Social' Human Resources: Talent Management in the 'Social' Organization," by Amelia Manuti adds new insights to this debate by focusing on the role social media might play in the strategic and global management of talents. More specifically, it investigates how new media could be a support to most traditional HRM tools in the management of some crucial organizational processes such as career development and performance management.

Finally, Chapter 5, "From Theory to (Good) Practices: Human Capital and Social Media According to Human Resource Managers," is entirely devoted to enrich the debate with the experience of some of the most representative HR managers in the international scenario. Indeed, it contains 17 interviews about HR practices in the era of social media that contribute to give invaluable precious insights, for both theoretical developments and professional practice.

Acknowledgments

Here we are, together again to celebrate another dream coming true. Actually, it is as if the discussion about human capital we started last year, on the occasion of the publishing of *Why Human Capital Is Important for Organizations*, finds a continuation here and if possible a further amplification. We wish that the inputs we gave in the present book might inspire further discussions and investigations in the near future.

We need to thank many friends and colleagues for having reached this second goal.

First, we wish to thank the editor, the Palgrave Macmillan group, more specifically Liz Barlow, for having trusted our effort to concentrate on such a challenging and innovative topic.

We thank the blinded referees who gave us invaluable advice to work on the draft.

We thank our friends and colleagues around the world for the precious discussions and for the suggestions we often shared through social media.

We thank our co-authors, Maria Cesaria Giordano and Maria Antonietta Impedovo, for their competent contribution.

We thank the HR specialists who kindly accepted to give an added special value to our work.

We thank our families and lovers for their unconditioned patience and love.

Notes on Contributors

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A psychologist by background, he has worked on the evaluation of management development, the learning process, competencies and self-development, corporate management development policy, career formation, organizational learning, knowledge managing, virtual organization, and leadership. He is concerned to apply ideas from research to the practical reconstruction of contemporary organizations through management, leadership, and organization development, and the evaluation of initiatives in this area. He is particularly interested in working with organizations that wish to use the formulation and implementation of Corporate Management Development Policy, and the evaluation of its implementation as a cornerstone of their efforts to create their futures. His research interests have recently returned to evaluation, and his current focus is evaluation-led management education and development policy and practice. He has been, and still is, interested in learning organization approaches, and now this includes the application of network theory in all these areas.

Pasquale Davide de Palma is expert in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Social Recruiting and Social Human Capital. Pasquale's interests are focused on human capital management; in particular, he aims to promote

the use of human capital financial statements within organizations. He holds a Master's in Human Resource Management from MELIUSFORM Business School (Italy), and Spegea Business School (Italy), and a post-graduate qualification as a marketing expert. He has 11 certifications in the process of human capital management. He is co-author and editor of *Lost and Found Work* (2012). He is co-author and editor of *Why Human Capital Is Important for Organization* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). He is Founder and CEO at Das HumanKapital. Das HumanKapital is sixth in International Leadership Partner and Provider at Leadership 500 Awards 2015.

Maria Cesaria Giordano is Storyteller and Enthusiast Social Manager at Das HumanKapital. She graduated at the University of Bari in Psychology of Organization and Communication. She holds a Master's in Multimedia Management for Communication from the University of Torino. From voluntary work to training design, to marketing and communication of social media, she is fond of new technologies and of "social mobile" narratives supported by smartphones and social networks. She is also cofounder of Das HumanKapital, an innovative start-up, active in the virtualization of organizational practices and corporate digitalization.

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Amelia Manuti is a senior researcher in Work and Organizational Psychology at the University of Bari (Italy). In 2003 she received her PhD in Psychology of Communication, and since 2005 is Assistant Professor of Work and Organizational Psychology. She is a teacher in Training and Organizational Development, Organizational Psychology, and Psychology of Marketing and Advertising. Her main research interests are working in school-to-university and university-to-work transitions, vocational guidance, formal and informal learning, organizational identification, work values, and organizational communication. She is the author of several articles and publications on these topics. Together with Pasquale Davide de Palma, she edited *Why Human Capital*

Is Important for Organizations (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Since 2001 she has been member of the European Network of Work and Organizational Psychologists and of the International Association of Applied Psychology. She is also an active member of the Italian Association of Psychology and of Collaborative Knowledge Building Group. Since 2007 she is secretary of the International Association of Applied Psycholinguistics. She has taken part in many national and international research projects in the field of work and organizational psychology. Since 2008 she has been a delegate for career guidance for the department of education, psychology, and communication. She coordinates the activities promoted by the career guidance desk of the department, and she is also responsible for the Center for Lifelong Learning in the same department.

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Human Capital Reloaded: The Use of Social Media in Human Resource Management

Maria Cesaria Giordano, Amelia Manuti and Pasquale Davide de Palma

Abstract: *The chapter aims at discussing the concept of human capital with reference to some of the main Human Resource Management practices (e.g., recruiting, talent management and marketing). The latter are re-read in light with the increasing use of social media as a strategic support to several organizational actions. Therefore, the authors discuss the challenges and opportunities granted by social media use in organizations and focus on the main implications that this revolution has had for human capital theory.*

1   Introduction

Social media are one of the main current priorities for managers and executives who are engaged in identifying ways in which organizations can make profitable use of applications such as Wikipedia, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, just to quote a few. Despite this interest, there seems to be very limited understanding of what the term "Social Media" exactly means. Social media refer to a set of "internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Such phenomenon has diffused very rapidly in just a few years, having grown to now entertain 1.5 billion users, according to some most recent statistics (Chiu et al., 2012). Boyd and Ellison (2007) consider the phenomenon as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (p. 7). Social media further distinguish themselves from traditional media, as they are a quite cheap and easily accessible tool while enabling individuals to both publish and consume information in a pervasive and very efficacious way. Consequently, social media have been classified as one of the most powerful sources for news, trends and marketing, especially when identified with well-known platforms such as Facebook and Twitter that are increasingly showing advantages both for individuals and companies. Through its interactive nature, this media channel has been a revolution not only for the communications of organizations, communities, and individuals, but has also grown an entirely new commercial marketplace (Chiu et al., 2012; Helft, 2012).

Following its success, social media have gained significant attention from scholars and practitioners, resulting in the production of a rich "how-to" literature (Sterne, 2010; Safko & Brake, 2009; Agresta & Bough, 2011). However, there is a lack of empirical research on the topic. Actually, current research appears to be highly focused on the demographics of users and on how organizations can exploit the media from a marketing standpoint. Despite the huge interest in social media, academic research is lacking and does not provide a fully detailed understanding of the phenomena (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Current literature is often rigid, becoming quickly outdated, and does not underline the innovative and

composite nature of the social media market and of its contributors – often failing to consider adequate empirical evidences. Another lack in academic research is the scarce investigation of how social media could be fruitfully incorporated in Human Resource Management, which can be a strategic ally for many different organizational processes.

In view of these, the aim of the present chapter is to discuss challenges and opportunities of social media usage in Human Resource Management. In this vein, the chapter argues that social media use in organizations, if properly managed and framed within the official organizational culture, could often contribute to enhance the organizational and individual processes (e.g., collaboration, knowledge sharing) that could mostly lead to a successful performance.

2   Human capital and social media

The concept of human capital is strictly linked to the added value people provide to organizations. As pointed out by Chatzkel (2004) "human capital is the differentiator for organizations and the actual basis for competitive advantage" (p. 338). Yet, what really makes the difference between organizations in terms of business success is the know-how they possess, namely, the capital of imagination and creativity expressed by their employees, which is actually unique if successfully managed (Ehrenberg & Smith, 1997). In this vein, human capital, meant as the stock of knowledge and skills, coming from the education, training, and experience of one's own human resources, is an important element of the intangible assets of an organization, together with customer relations, brands, copyright, and company image.

According to Scarborough and Elias (2002) the concept of human capital could be interpreted as a bridging concept since it concretely shows the link between HR practices and business performance "in terms of assets rather than business processes." In this perspective, human capital is to a large extent "non-standardized, tacit, dynamic, context dependent and embodied in people." Therefore, workers should not be treated as passive assets to be bought, sold, and replaced. Conversely, they actively control their own working lives as long as they are allowed to grow up as persons and professionals in their job and to learn and to improve knowledge and skills. That is why basically no system of "human asset accounting" has succeeded in producing a convincing

method of attaching financial values to human resources. Investments by employers in training and developing people is a means of attracting and retaining human capital as well as getting better returns from those investments. However, employers need to remember that workers, especially knowledge workers, may regard themselves as free agents who can choose how and where they invest their talents, time, and energy. Nonetheless, though human capital theory could be very fascinating for organizations, interest in it should not divert attention from the other aspects of intellectual capital – social and organizational capital – that are concerned with developing and embedding the knowledge possessed by the human capital of an organization (Schuller, 2000).

This definition of the human component of an organization in terms of human capital, as illustrated earlier, leads to a reconceptualization of the traditional Human Resource Management practices that manager and HR executives are used to adopt to keep their organization tough and competitive on the market. Indeed within the past 30 years much has changed in these terms but currently we are assisting to a further revolution as a consequence of the diffusion of social media even in the organizational context. The sections that follow will attempt at drawing some of the main changes that two important cornerstones in the management of an organization – namely, marketing communication strategies and recruiting process – have undergone after the introduction of social media.

3   Social media and integrated marketing communication strategies

One of the most diffused and almost "conventional" use organizations make of social media is to support integrated marketing communication strategies. Integrated marketing communications attempt "to coordinate and control the various elements of the promotional mix – advertising, personal selling, public relations, publicity, direct marketing, and sales promotion – to produce a unified customer-focused message and, therefore, achieve various organizational objectives" (Boone & Kurtz, 2007, p. 488).

Given this broader definition, it is uncontestable, however, that the diffusion of social media has radically redefined the strategies and tools used to communicate with customers, who in the meantime have gained

an even more active role not only in consuming but also in generating contents (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2004).

Actually, new social media grant a wide variety of communication contexts to customers: from the most proactive ones as, for instance, the word-of-mouth forums and blogs, the company-sponsored newsgroup discussion, and the consumer product/service ratings websites to the most "traditional" ones such as customers' mailing list and social networking sites.

In the meantime, while allowing a more dialogical communication with consumers, the explosion of these forms of exchange have become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behavior including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behavior, and postpurchase communication and evaluation.

Some successful case studies in the field (see among others General Electric, 2008; Procter & Gamble, 2008) show that when integrated marketing communication strategies clearly reflect the organization's mission and vision they are more effective on consumers' behavior. Actually, social media play three interrelated promotional roles in the marketplace as suggested by Mangold and Faulds (2009). First, social media allow companies to talk to their customers. Second, they allow customers to talk to one another. Third, social media also enable customers to talk to companies.

The first role is common with many other traditional internet-based tools. Namely, companies can use social media to talk to their customers through platforms such as blogs, as well as Facebook groups. These media may either be company-sponsored or sponsored by other individuals or organizations.

The second role played by social media is distinctive: customers can use social media to communicate with one another, as in a traditional word-of-mouth communication. This function of social media could be particularly useful to develop and to maintain a tough organizational identity and a good brand reputation, thus strengthening also consumer loyalty.

Finally, the third role of social media refers to the opportunity granted by these tools to give a direct feedback about the quality of the service and/or of the product, as in the case of customer relationship management.

Given these intrinsic potentialities Mangold and Faulds (2009) argue that, social media could be considered a hybrid element of the promotion mix because they combine features of traditional integrated marketing communication tools (companies talking to customers) with a rather innovative

form of word-of-mouth (customers talking to one another), which is quite independent from the official marketing strategy, as long as consumers can produce, edit, and disseminate contents on their own (Ramsey, 2006; Vollmer & Precourt, 2008; Singh, Veron-Jackson, & Cullinane, 2008). This is the reason why several organizations aim to incorporate social media into their integrated marketing communication strategies (Li & Bernoff, 2008). Indeed, differently from what happened when a traditional communication paradigm dominated, contemporary organizations cannot control the content, frequency, timing, and medium of communications (Mayzlin, 2006). In this new social-media-driven paradigm, information about products and services also comes from the marketplace, that is, it could also have been produced by consumers, thus conferring a power to consumers that they have not previously experienced in the marketplace.

Consequently, consumer behavior has radically changed as well. In other words, even consumers who do not directly produce contents are demanding more control over their media consumption. They require on-demand and immediate access to information at their own convenience (Rashtchy et al., 2007; Vollmer & Precourt, 2008). They frequently use the various types of social media to conduct their information searches and to make their purchasing decisions (Lempert, 2006; Vollmer & Precourt, 2008).

Further, another implication of this new paradigm is that for many consumers social media are becoming a more reliable source of information regarding products and services than corporate-sponsored communications transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotion mix (Foux, 2006).

In view of this, social media use in this context urged a radical revision of the traditional paradigm of marketing communication. This could be useful both to investigate the ever changing attitudes of post-modern consumers and to formulate more efficacious integrated marketing communication strategies.

4   Social media as tool to attract and recruit human resources

Another quite diffused use of social media in organizational life is linked to the practices of employer branding and recruiting. Both uses are strictly related to job posting advertisement on the internet. This type

of activity could be a profitable communicative option that matches job demand and offer. Yet, it could be used both from those organizations interested in conveying a positive corporate image and thus in attracting talents potentially interested in working with them as well as from individuals simply looking for a job (Sivertzen, Nilsen, & Olafsen, 2013). Some social networking sites (e.g., MySpace, Facebook) have even added classified sections for job seekers and job posters (Manuti, Cortini, & Mininni, 2005). However, even in this case, little empirical research (e.g., DeKay, 2009) has been produced on using social networking sites to attract and to recruit employees. Given the paucity of research on both employer branding and recruiting through social media, some key questions could be addressed as to better examine the implications of using the internet-based communications for these aims.

The first question is how the use of these sites for recruiting affects the level of job applicants' skills. Some research on Internet talent selecting and recruiting in general has indicated that by relying on social media employers might get more qualified applicants, but also more unqualified applicants (see Mathis & Jackson, 2008). However, most of these sites allow for more targeted selection and recruiting (i.e., there are specific filters that allow to identify applicants by certain characteristics).

A second question is related to job seekers' motivation and proactivity in job posting. This aspect could of course have important implications for the process of talent selection and thus for the definition of employer branding strategies brought about by organizations (DeKay, 2009). Yet, some empirical evidences show that the targets of applicants using different websites (e.g., LinkedIn, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter) may differ significantly (Atal, 2007; Levy, 2007). For example, LinkedIn is a professional network, whereas Facebook and MySpace are used largely for social purposes.

Another question to further debate refers to the applicants' reactions to job postings on social networking sites. Given that social networking sites are not always publicly accessible (even though most individuals can get an account on the major sites), applicants may not consider the postings on these sites favorably as compared with more traditional means, for instance, postings on company websites, public job boards, and so on. Moreover, generational and racial differences could have impact on applicants' reactions. For example, recent studies have showed that younger individuals (e.g., Generation Y) may be less concerned about privacy than prior generations (see Peluchette & Karl, 2009). Thus,

younger applicants might be more accepting of the use of these sites to recruit. Further, if older generations are less technologically expert or have more limited access to the technology, they may consider recruiting through these sites to be less acceptable.

Finally, a last question could refer to the investigation of applicants' reactions to the organization's presence on Facebook or on Twitter. This evidence could be crucial in investigating if and to what extent the presence on social networks could convey a particular image of the organization and/or generating attraction and interest in applying for a job.

In sum, given the very little research in this new emerging field, this is still a domain that needs to be investigated both to understand the cost-effectiveness of using these sites relative to more traditional approaches and to examine applicants' perceptions of the web-based recruiting process with respect to more traditional one.

5 Toward a conclusion: opportunities and challenges of social media use for individual and organizations

The scenario sketched earlier allows to draw some conclusions about social media use for individuals and organizations. Accordingly, the challenges and opportunities discussed earlier find a further amplification if connected with the functions that social media may have for individual and organizational experience. According to some of the most recent literature in the field (Kietzmann et al., 2011) social media's distinctive features grant specific affordances and make sense of the different levels of their functionality. These features are identity, reputation, group, conversation, sharing, presence, and relationship.

One of the most evident feature of social media is that they allow users to reveal their identities. Information could be voluntarily disclosed (i.e., name, age, gender, profession, location) and strategically manipulated and managed to portray one's own identity in certain ways. With reference to professional identity, social media could be considered similar to business cards since they allow individuals to make their identities visible and organizations to adopt focused employer-branding strategies encouraging users to follow them.

A second feature strictly linked to the previous one is that social media allow to build and reinforce reputation. As discussed with reference to

the recruiting process, reputation in social media is a matter of trust, since not always the reliability of the information conveyed by technologies is high. LinkedIn, for instance, as well as Research gate build the reputation of one individual based on endorsements from others. However, in social media, reputation refers not only to people but also to their content, which is often evaluated using content voting systems. In this vein, again with reference to the functionality of social media, for instance, to recruiting and selecting talents, these platforms could be fully exploited by organizations to "study" a candidate and prove his/her reliability. Furthermore, reputation has significant implications for how organizations should effectively engage social media. Indeed, the number of followers on Twitter, for instance, has limited value in that it only indicates how popular a person is, not how many people actually read the posts. Since people can follow as many others as they like, they also do not have a reason to "unfollow" anyone. In practical terms this would mean that organizations should carefully evaluate their investment in social media to avoid a useless expenditure of energies.

Another interesting affordance of the social media grant is related to groups, that is, the extent to which users can form communities and subcommunities. The more "social" a network becomes, the bigger the group of friends, followers, and contacts is. Social media platforms have recognized that many communities have extended the number of social contacts a person may have in his life and offer tools that allow users to manage membership. Two major types of groups exist. Organizations can exploit this function of social media both for marketing communication purposes as well as for corporate internal communication strategies. In this perspective, the creation of groups and communities linked to brand management, that is, online communities that discuss about a product and/or about a brand, may allow organizations to increase consumers' brand loyalty and reputation, thus exploiting the power granted by opinion leaders who guide groups and discussions. In a similar vein, online groups and communities may contribute to reinforce organizational identification and consequently commitment and motivation thus leading to more effective Human Resource Management practices.

Conversation is a further feature that represents the extent to which users communicate with other users in a social media setting. Many social media sites are designed primarily to facilitate conversations

among individuals and groups. These conversations happen for all sorts of reasons. People tweet, chat, blog to meet people, to find true love, to build their self-esteem, or to participate to the settlement of new trending topics. Yet, others see social media as a way of making their message visible and heard and positively impacting humanitarian causes, environmental problems, economic issues, or political debates (Beirut, 2009).

Strictly connected with conversation is the sharing feature, namely, the extent to which users exchange, distribute, and receive content. The term 'social' often implies that exchanges between people are crucial. In many cases, however, sociality is about the objects that mediate these ties between people (Engestrom, 2005), the reasons why they meet online and associate with each other. Consequently, social media consist of people who are connected by a shared object (e.g., text, video, picture, sound, link, location). Sharing alone is a way of interacting in social media, but whether sharing leads users to want to converse or even build relationships with each other depends on the functional objective of the social media platform. This is a fundamental implication for all organizations with ambition to engage in social media. These features, sharing and conversation, have important implications for the organization as long as they could be strategically used to improve for instance team building and collaborative learning processes. Indeed by sharing ideas and by participating to online discussions people might be encouraged to share knowledge and to develop practices that in turn could be also functional to the management of organizational complexity.

Presence represents the extent to which users can know if other users are accessible (Kietzman et al., 2010). It includes knowing where others are, in the virtual world and/or in the real world, and whether they are available. In the virtual world, this happens through status lines like "available" or "hidden." The implications of this feature for organizations are mostly linked to synchronous and asynchronous modalities of communication and consequently to the pervasive role that sometimes work may play in one's life. Indeed the possibility to be always "present" in the workplace although virtually creates expectations that may heavily influence the person/organization relationship and consequently individual performance and participation.

Finally, there is the relationships feature, that is, the extent to which users can be related to other users. By "relate," we mean that two or more users have some form of interaction that leads them to communicate, share objects, meet, or simply just list each other as a friend or fan (Kietzman et al., 2011). In some cases, these relationships are fairly

formal, regulated, and structured. On other platforms, relationships are informal and without structure.

As to conclude, several are the opportunities and challenges granted by social media use for both individuals and organizations. The other chapters of the volume will attempt at highlighting how these features could be actually exploited to enhance organizational processes in the perspective of the human capital theory discussed earlier.

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2

Communicating the "Social" Organization: Social Media and Organizational Communication

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Abstract: *The author discusses how social media use has radically redesigned the ordinary practices of organizational (formal and informal) communication. Therefore, social media are described as a new class of technologies that may alter organizational dynamics in profound ways. Given this finding, the chapter attempts at explicating how and to what extent social media merge with ongoing communicative processes that occur within and constitute organizations, arguing that they may affect particular organizational processes that are of great interest to communication researchers.*

1   Introduction

As showed in the previous chapter, the use of social media technologies in organizations is rapidly proliferating, in the hope that these new communicative practices will help improving important organizational processes. Yet, despite this increased adoption, the implications of their use are still undervalued by communication researchers. Some scholars have further suggested that social media adoption in organizations may also alter various organizational processes (Balmer, 2001; Huang, Baptista, & Galliers, 2013).

Given this lack of research, the aims of this chapter are basically two. First, to explore the emerging body of research on the use of social media in organizations in order to highlight how social media merge with ongoing communicative processes that occurs within and constitute organizations. Second, to draw implications for how the use of social media within organizations may affect particular organizational processes that are of great interest to communication researchers.

2   Social Media as a communicative practice of (post) modern culture

In the past few decades, social media have radically changed the way people communicate, interact, and define relationships by encouraging users to co-create and share information with others.

In this vein, scholars and practitioners in the field have largely contribute to define the peculiarities of such media, by granting plenty of definitions. Yet, social media are "web-based internet networks where users can share information and communicate with other users in a collective manner" (Cavico, Mujtaba, Muffler, & Samuel, 2013, p. 26). Furthermore, they are "social interactions using technology (such as the internet and cell phones) with any combination of words, pictures, video, or audio" (Smith, 2012, p. 24) that allow users to "communicate, socialize, sharing email, documents, pictures, video, audio files, and do each in a number of different ways" (Ibidem).

If we consider the most famous and diffused platforms created by social media we could easily see how they have completely transformed the way that friends, family, co-workers, and others communicate on a day-to-day basis, through their participation in the creation and sharing

of specific types of messages and contents (Fischer & Reuber, 2011). Facebook has become the fastest growing and most popular social media website since it was founded in 2004. Similarly, Twitter, founded in 2006, has gained an increasing attention due to its "ability to communicate in real-time short messages," which enables users to "relate by 'tweets'" or messages consisting of 140 characters or less (Waters & Williams, 2011, p. 354). Besides interpersonal and leisure uses, social media are also diffusing in organizations. Gelms (2012), for instance, points out that in the United States "eighty-three percent of companies utilize at least one form of social media. Fifty-nine percent have corporate Twitter accounts, and 71% have a corporate Facebook profile" (p. 268).

Therefore, as social media have diffused in our culture and society, scholars across multiple disciplines have continued to focus their attention on social media in their research. A recent study (Khang, Ki, & Ye, 2012) has showed that social media in advertising, communication, marketing, and public relations is one of the main topics of most research articles.

Accordingly, much scientific debate has concentrated on the discussion about the nature and implications of social media use both in personal and professional life.

Some scholars have treated them as just another genre of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Herring, 2004), while others have attempted to define social media, broadly, as a distinct category of technologies. The first stream of research, the default approach, is mostly concentrated on the description of the typologies of technologies that are generally recognized as such (e.g., blogs, wikis, SNSs), and fails to give a clear definition of what social media actually are. On the contrary, the referential approach, examines the technical potentialities of technology rather than focusing on how social media could really transform the organizational context where they are present (Leonardi, 2009). Furthermore, those studies that focus on the features of specific technologies in organizations fail to investigate the effects they produce with reference to the organizational practice (Nass & Mason, 1990). Therefore, even if most of the studies on social media have contributed to define the technical features of the tools used in a particular organizational context fail to develop theoretical explanations about the consequences these media produce on the process of organizing. Accordingly, as commented also by Treem and Leonardi (2012) "current definitions of social media are either too application-focused, preventing generalization across

contexts, or too broad, obscuring the ways the technology may influence behaviors" (p. 45).

To balance the opposition some authors have proposed to reread the effects produced by social media use adopting the affordance concept, since it may help to explain why people use the same technology with similar or disparate communication and work goals. Most recently, scientific research has focused on the relational character of affordances. These studies consider affordances not exclusively "as properties of people or of artifacts" (Treem & Leonari, 2012, p. 146). Affordances are produced in the relationships between people and the materiality of the things with which they come in contact. In this perspective, "materiality" is the feature of a technological artifact – a piece of hardware and/or of software. , that exists independent of people, while affordances do not. In the relational view, affordances of an artifact can change across different contexts even if its materiality remains the same. Espousing this relational approach, recent studies have showed that the affordances granted by one technology could be often the same or similar across different organizational settings because the material features of the technology may limit the uses and interpretations people have about it (Leonardi & Barley, 2008; Leonardi, 2011). In a similar vein, studies on technology use in organizations (Hutchby, 2001; Orlikowski, 2007; Markus & Silver, 2008; Leonardi, 2010) have highlighted that adopting the affordances approach to explain the relationship between technologies and organizational systems could be beneficial to theoretical development in different ways. Above all, research has showed that focusing on the affordances granted once individuals begin to use features of a new technology helps explaining effects within and across organizations and limits deterministic conclusions about technologically induced organizational change.

Yet, Treem and Leonardi (2012) have recently discussed four relatively consistent affordances enabled by these new technologies, namely, visibility, persistence, editability, and association, suggesting that the activation of some combination of these affordances could influence many of the organizational processes such as socialization, knowledge sharing, and power processes.

According to the authors, first of all, people using social media are afforded with visibility, that is, they are allowed to see information related to the status of ongoing activities in the organization; they are provided with meta-knowledge about the type of people in the organization and what they may know. Second, social media afford persistence

as long as they make organizational knowledge "reviewable" (Clark & Brennan, 1991) and "recordable" (Hancock, Toma, & Ellison, 2007). In this perspective, social media sustain organizational knowledge over time, create robust forms of communication and help workers in growing contents. The third affordance granted by social media is editability that refers to the fact that individuals can work and rework on a a communicative act before it is viewed by others (Walther, 1993). This affordance allow people in (1) regulating personal expressions; (2) targeting content; and (3) improving information quality. Finally, social media afford associations, that is, they connect people to people (social tie) and people to contents (as, for instance, in a wiki contribution, a blog contribution, or the tagging of an article). This affordance sustains people in organizations in their effort to access relevant information and to enable connections.

As discussed earlier, Treem and Leonardi (2012) have stressed that these affordances become particularly important as long as they are related to some relevant organizational processes, namely, the authors connect them particularly to socialization, knowledge sharing, and power management. For instance, social media affordances could be precious for an expert as well as for a newcomer to gather information, to share knowledge, and to socialize with colleagues thus developing a positive P/O fit.

In sum, to define social media by describing what kinds of behaviors they typically afford across various organizations, could be precious as to transcend the features of technologies, and to focus on the specific communicative outcomes they produce. Moreover, to define social media by enumerating its affordances may allow the understanding of when, why, and how social media occasion change in organizational practice. Indeed, taken together, social media could easily be considered a defining feature of modern culture as long as they have become a central part of the way people communicate daily in both their social and professional relationships.

3   Social media use in organizations

As several different forms of social media start to emerge, and the corporate world continues to become more competitive and complex, organizations are becoming involved in the implementation of social

media to maintain their organizational status. Owing to the ever-growing popularity of social media use, organizations have placed high importance on understanding how to appropriately manage the use of social media and understand its effectiveness (Holtz, 2006; Berger, 2008; DiStaso, McCorkindale, & Wright, 2011). Social media have become an essential part of today's integrated organizational communication strategies for many workplaces, due to their easily accessible, low-cost, and "user-friendly" means of "sharing user-generated material" (Fischer & Reuber, 2011, p. 2).

The use of social media within an organization can have a positive impact on the consumer's experience because of its dynamic capability, allowing for the adjustment needs changing over time. To this purpose, Sashi (2012) has stated that "as the exchange becomes more relational and the emotional bonds become stronger, customers become advocates for sellers in interactions with other customers and non-customers" (p. 268). Unlike traditional marketing techniques, this exchange of information between consumers and user-generated content has increased both satisfaction and advocacy, and built stronger customer engagement for organizations that have adapted the use of social media as a marketing strategy (Sashi, 2012).

While there are various reasons for its popularity, one identifiable quality that users like about social media is that it is an interactive process allowing individuals to engage in social interactions (Fischer & Reuber, 2011). Social media are a natural extension to the communication world that has provided organizations with the opportunity to interact and share information more frequently with consumers (Papasolomou & Melanthiou, 2012). Social media have altered the everyday communication that occurs both internally and externally, by enabling an interactive and dynamic process to occur between individuals and the organization. Social media have created an interactive dyadic dialogue that represents both the voices of the user and the organization (Reitz, 2012). Consequently, organizations are becoming increasingly more attracted to establishing a social media presence to engage with consumers so that they may help shaping their consumers' experiences and use them as leverage for a greater marketing impact (Lipsman, Graham, Rich, & Bruich, 2012). This also allows them to adjust according to what they learn about their publics to improve the overall satisfaction of the publics' needs (Reitz, 2012).

In addition to the organizational impact that they have, social media can also enhance the reputation of the organization and generate

organizational satisfaction because of the opportunity they provide to discover its consumers' opinions (Reitz, 2012). While it is important to organizations to consider incorporating the use of social media into their marketing strategies, it is also imperative that they consider how this interactive process will engage consumers in a rich and meaningful dialogue that will benefit the organization as well.

The use of social media has given consumers the expectation that they will engage as active participants of the organization. In order to be successful in their social media strategies, organizations need to remember that consumers are in control of their online experiences. Therefore, organizations must give consumers a valid reason to engage electronically by providing them with a unique and customizable experience. In order to do so, organizations must first consider consumer motivations to use social media. Organizations should generate a social media marketing strategy aiming to enhance consumers' experiences (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). The use of social media allows for "multiple voices as well as targeted communication, simultaneous wider reach and richness, and combined consumption and production of rhetorical content" (Huang, Baptista, & Galliers, 2011, p. 121). As seen in the first chapter, social media can also pose implications for an organization's reputation among their consumers.

However, social media use impacts organizational life not only externally, namely, it is a very effective marketing communication strategy, but also internally, as a powerful corporate communication means. Yet, previous research has shown how social media are increasingly becoming a means of organizational communication with the public and with employees as well. In a very recent study, Leonardi et al. (2013) have examined how the use of social media among employees could affect the communicative activities through which work is accomplished. Much of the research surrounding social media has marginalized the effect that the use of social media has had on organizations that have implemented it as part of their organizational communication.

Accordingly, organizational communication has laid the framework for scholars to determine how communication affects all aspects of functioning within an organization. Communication will always be an essential part of an organization because it connects each individual function and group as a whole, and it is also the means by which an organization is both created and sustained (Santra & Giri, 2009). Communication is a critical component of an organization because it allows members to

shape the culture through their individual perceptions, which strengthens organizational identification and it also enables an organization to reach its potential goals (Modaff, DeWine, & Butler, 2007; Santra & Giri, 2009). According to Modaff et al. (2007), "organizational communication is considered the process of creating, exchanging, interpreting (correctly or incorrectly), and storing messages within a system of human inter-relationships" (p. 3). Santra and Giri (2009) have also noted that this dynamic process goes beyond the simple transfer of information, but rather seeks to influence a specific behavior.

Researchers have long been aware of the importance of organizational communication, which is apparent in the ever-growing body of work that has studied organizational communication in a variety of contexts. In the past, organizational communication research focused on interpreting how communication varied across different types of organizations. However, recently the focus has shifted to how new technologies affect the organizational communication process. For instance, Santra and Giri (2009) have studied the profound impact that CMC has had on organizations. Their research focused on how this new method has not only made communication more effective, but more convenient and affordable as well. Not only is it important to look at organizational communication itself, but also necessary to review areas of research that consider the impact it has had on organization effectiveness. Yet, organizational effectiveness is "dependent on how well organization members are able to communicate and use relevant information" (Kreps, 1985, p. 109). Recently, organizational effectiveness has been impacted by the use of CMC, by improving both the internal and external communication capabilities of an organization. CMC has increased the participation of organizational members because it has created more equality and less social pressure (Santra & Giri, 2009). According to Santra and Giri (2009), through computer-mediated communication, organizational members are able to "slowly establish shared meanings and develop a sense of organizational identity" (p. 106). While face-to-face communication is still the best form of communication within an organization, doing so on a regular basis is no longer feasible in most organizations, making organizational effectiveness dependant on CMC to fulfill most organizational processes (Santra & Giri, 2009). The advancements in technology have continued to improve the quality of work by enabling organizational members to communicate more effectively on a regular basis, thus improving the overall effectiveness of the organization.

4   Effects and implications of social media use in organizations

As shown earlier, social media use affects organizational communication that occurs within an organization, with employees, with stakeholders, with consumers, and with the public. Nonetheless, if social media use is not properly attuned to the strategic vision of the organization its several potentialities could easily turn into risks and undesired effects.

With special reference to external communication, while this interactive process between organizations and consumers can provide an organization with information to adapt to the changing needs of consumers, using social media can also pose a potential risk if organizations are not careful. DiStaso, McCorkindale, and Wright (2011) have recently interviewed public relations executives to determine the impact of social media on their organizations. One participant stated that the greatest risk for an organization is to "ignore social media and to allow conversation to happen without awareness or participation" (p. 326).

Despite evidence suggesting that, organizations need to better adapt to this new system of communication, research shows that most organizations are still engaging in one-way communication and responding minimally to consumers through social media (Waters & Williams, 2011). Sometimes, this lack of control and one-way interactions can make an organization susceptible to misguided actions of some social media users. According to DiStaso et al. (2011), it is often difficult for organizations to accept "the lack of control associated with social media and not knowing what people might say or do" (p. 326). Therefore, in order to maintain as much regulation as possible, it is imperative that organizations consistently participate in these ongoing interactions so that they may avoid both internal and external negative consequences.

As for internal communication, social media can contribute to a number of organizational dimensions: improvement of communication processes, community development, facilitation of information flow, promotion of values and consolidation of organizational culture, and stimulation of creativity, even of collective intelligence, under optimum conditions.

Social media adoption constraints emerge as difficult-to-counteract limits. The first one could be hesitation, namelyusers might not know how to use social media and might find difficulties in adopting the

technology. Second users could experience incertitude, once they might have opinions regarding the low potential of the communication means. Finally, users might experience conditions of reduced adaptability to the organizational environment. This list could be further enriched depending on the social-economic and cultural background in which the organization operates. Risks may also appear following the use of social media: they are related to information security, to the way resources are granted, to time management, to how organizational culture and online identity manifest themselves and to the implementation and management of the new technologies (the lack of knowledge and understanding of social media).

Another question is whether all companies should use social media. Yet, it is obvious that not all companies use social media, at least for product promotion. If target audiences are not internet users, then this attempt is futile (e.g., rural aging population). The company addressing these audiences must see, however, if social media are somehow necessary for brand or internal communication. It should also be taken into account whether the organization is prepared for social media implementation and which are the potential barriers that can block this attempt. Moreover, the resources required for implementation shall be considered and it shall be established whether the goals of social media communication should be enclosed in the general goals of organizational communication.

Communication consultants say that in order to be efficient, social media strategy should be established within the general company strategy and that of communication. Entering social media may occur any time, so long as there is a strategy, and depending on the company's needs and objectives: of communication, business, marketing, and so on.

Social media strategy consists of the same elements as the communication one: target audience, goals, content strategy or communication pillars, suitable channels, tools, competitors, and so on. The top management should follow social media strategy implementation and results because these channels are not just a means of communication but also one of relating to customers. Finally, performance indicators for social media should be set from the beginning, when the strategy is defined, depending on the company communication and business goals: reputation, brand associations, turnover. Among others, organizations could draw attention on some qualitative (e.g., degree of community involvement, relevance of general conversations, quality of the content

published) and quantitative indicators (e.g., number of fans/followers/ members, number of shares as likes, comments, tweets, retweets, shares, mentions, referrals).

5   Conclusion

Social media allow the development of a "powerful global discourse" (Berger, 2008) in which everybody can take part, exchanging opinions, ideas, knowledge, and images. Web 2.0 tools give communication professionals the opportunity to become more and more innovative and creative and add increasing value to the business. They support the development of an authentic community inside the organization, increase the degree of employee cooperation both individually and at team level, and encourage the exchange of experience and expertise in real time. However, these channels have, just like the traditional ones, advantages and disadvantages, and only a careful evaluation of them can make them efficient. This chapter has attempted to show how social media use can enhance internal and external communication. It has also illustrated some of the constraints and risks that organizations deciding to use this modern communication method might experience. In view of this, it finally suggests that the actual challenge for the future is to redesign the traditional organizational structures and processes in order to develop contexts flexible enough to meet the communicative demands in this new "social" era.

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3

Enhancing Human Capital through Social Media: Promoting Skills and Learning through Technology

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Abstract: *The chapter deals with the relationship between knowledge management, social media, and organizational learning. The authors discuss the role played by social media in improving the organizational processes of knowledge creating, sharing, and managing that are basilar to an effective human capital management. Accordingly, the chapter describes social media as a strategic tool to improve those soft and self-regulatory skills (e.g., self-efficacy and self-regulated learning) that are indispensable to allow a passage from individual to "social" learning, which is a core concept for organizational efficacy.*

1   Introduction

Drawing on human capital theory, empirical evidence has shown that not all employees possess knowledge and skills that are of equal strategic importance for competitive advantage (Lepak & Snell, 1999). Therefore given the current acceleration imposed by technologies and innovations and the pressures to efficiency, change, and complexity management, postmodern organizations are urged to carefully design their human resource architecture, namely, to plan their human capital allocation and development in a way that could enhance the often unexpressed potentialities of every worker (Lepak & Snell, 2002). In this light, learning becomes a strategic factor in Human Resource Management since it allows developing unique and firm-specific skills. Yet, given the scenario mentioned, healthy and resilient organizations, namely, organizations that succeed in surviving to market turbulences thanks to their human capital, are those organizations that develop and retain soft skills useful to manage complexity, to share knowledge, and to adapt to changing contexts (Salanova et al., 2012). Consequently, these organizations also succeed in making profit from learning: they exploit both formal and informal modalities (Manuti et al., 2015) and rely upon the affordances granted by technology-mediated learning.

Moving from these premises, the purpose of this chapter is to offer answers to the following questions: which skills do workers need to support these new forms of learning useful to manage the current organizational complexity? Could self-reflexive skills play an active role in improving professional quality? How can technology support learning processes and skills development toward the goal of economic growth?

2   Restarting from the skills

The rapid changes that have invested production systems and work organizations, as well as the increasing availability of technology and cultural resources, have imposed a radical and timely reformulation of the skills required to manage organizational complexity. A most traditional view of expertise meant progressive accumulation of work-specific and technical competence has been shifted by some most recent reformulations of this notion, mostly inspired by new boundaryless and protean

careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Sullivan, 1999; Hall, 1996, 2002; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Briscoe, Hall, & Frautschy De Muth, 2006).

Therefore, within such a scenario, to give a definition of "skill" is a very complex task, the latter being a multifaceted and multiperspective construct, especially in light with the different theories on which it is rooted.

A widely agreed definition comes from the OECD (2003) that defines skill as the ability to mobilize and orchestrate internal resources (knowledge, motivations, meanings, interpretive schemes, routine practices, etc.) and external resources available to deal with a class or type of challenging situations in a valuable and productive way. Accordingly, skills become indicators of the broader specificity that different job positions require. Skills can thus be considered as coping strategies that activate in front of a difficulty and/or in front of a specific job/context demand.

In view of this, skills are at the same time meant as a personal equipment which is acquired in the course of our personal and professional life and which can be developed and enriched starting from the formal and informal experiences each individual collect. In this vein, skills could also be meant as a sort of sense-making repertoire that allows people to cope with difficulties to solve problems and to manage relationships in the professional as well as in the personal context.

In line with such definition and with the evidence according to which "(today) nobody knows exactly what needs to be learned" (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 24) skills are becoming a very fluid and open category. Yet, given the complexity of the postmodern working contexts nobody could be considered a 100% expert as long as even the most consolidated practices need new interpretative schemes, making the traditional models of learning no longer sufficiently adequate (Sonnentag, 2000). Experts in the workplace are no more simply the best performers, that is, those who perform "above the average," rather those who possess a wider and articulated repertoire of soft skills, such as metacognitive skills, problem-solving, and decision-making skills (Farrington-Darby & Wilson, 2006). This is the core of the human capital of an organization and that is why the European Union is also focusing so much attention on the need to develop soft skills, thus promoting initiatives addressed above all to young people (see, for instance, the European program "Erasmus Plus,"[1] the introduction of a European system of credits and skills certification, called *ECVET*,[2] as well as the European program

"Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs"[3] aimed at developing self-entrepreneurship among young people).

It is not a case that all initiatives are aimed at training and developing transversal skills, designed as "core skills and cross-curriculum competencies," as long as these have been proved to be resources not simply for the individual but also for organizations and communities.

As said earlier, if skills are a personal equipment that an individual develops and enriches during his/her life it is also true that the workplace is a privileged context where skills can be trained. Indeed, there are many opportunities to share, acquire, and demonstrate skills in the working context. One of the most evident ones are the communities of practice (COP) (Wenger, 1998). These are designed as a social context, mostly oriented to the development and sharing of skills and knowledge. A very peculiar feature of the COP is the contamination between the individual and the organization. Yet being part of a COP allows the individual to share organizational strategies, cultural policies, and processes, thus penetrating the "unmanaged" identity of the organization itself (Gabriel, 1995). On the contrary, through the COP, organizations have the opportunity to fully appreciate the skills of its workers and the growing awareness about the value of its human capital.

Besides the communities of practices, there are many other opportunities for formal and informal learning in organizations and thus for developing skills. Sonnentag, Niessen, and Ohly (2004) distinguish between training and development and formal and informal modes of learning. In their review of the literature, the authors propose to categorize as formal training all those activities such as seminars, workshops, and courses where learning is transmitted through "institutionalised and certified" modalities. On the contrary, they label as formal development the whole of career management and development programs (e.g., counseling, mentoring, coaching, job rotation) aimed at formally support workers in the actual professional growth. Moving to the informal modes of learning, Sonnentag and colleague identify as informal training the practices of organizational socialization and adjustment, which help workers to get attuned with the official organizational culture, and as informal development the practices of continuous learning, which engage individuals in the personal effort to "keep up-to-date" their skills.

Empirical evidences confirm that in all these situations what makes the difference between experts and novices, between a "competent" worker

and a newcomer, is always the ability to master and to manage soft skills (Sonnentag, 2000; Farrington-Darby & Wilson, 2006).

Given this background, besides technical skills, soft and self-regulatory skills appear to be an indispensable equipment for workers to cope with the current challenging complexity of the labor market and of the organizational life evoked at the beginning of the chapter (e.g., corporate crises, professional changing, multitasking job demands, increased degrees of role autonomy) and to contribute to enhance organizational competitiveness. Therefore, in the definition of their strategic plans, organizations should always keep in mind the relevance of this dimension of human capital; they should allocate resources to the continuous improvement of those intangible precious assets through specific ad-hoc training and development initiatives.

3   Soft and self-regulatory skills

As argued, soft and self-regulatory skills have been proved to be very important resources in the definition of professional expertise. This category of skills generally makes reference to two specific resources: self-efficacy and self-regulated learning and agency.

Self-efficacy indicates a self-perception that guides individuals in coping with difficulties relying upon one's own resources. This belief helps people in reacting to events by finding new and creative solutions as the output of the reelaboration of one's own personal repertoire of previous experience.

Bandura (1997, 2002) is the most authoritative scholar who has studied self-efficacy. He defines self-efficacy as a cognitive representation about one's own ability to managing tasks and challenges in the context that concretely guide goal-oriented actions. In this vein, self-efficacy is configured as a belief system that acts as a support and as a moderator for individual behaviors and actions, thus influencing also the motivational processes implied in the process. Accordingly, the levels of self-efficacy, meant as the system of personal beliefs concerning one's own ability to manage events successfully, is directly related to motivation, engagement, resilience, perseverance, and vulnerability to stress in case of failure. As a matter of fact, self-efficacy may determine the quality of the performance.

More specifically, the concept of self-efficacy could be further described moving from two main features: width, meant as the cognitive representation of the repertoire of tasks, and challenges that an individual expects to manage in a problematic situation and strength, that is, his/her ability to resist to critics and/or to failure. As a consequence, individuals with higher self-efficacy generally possess a richer representation of the chances and (cognitive, affective, concrete) resources they have to solve a difficult situation with (width) and show a more perseverant attitude in front of failures (strength). Therefore, they will also be more inclined to show a goal-oriented and motivated behavior.

Bandura identifies four main sources of information that sustain the development of self-efficacy that are also very important in the working context to support the improvement of this skill:

1 Direct experience: self-efficacy derives from direct positive experience acquired in different contexts. Yet, through successes and feedbacks individuals are led to develop a positive self-representation, which gradually convince them about their ability in managing situations of additional complexity.
2 Vicarious experiences and modeling: the positive representation of the self is derived by a process of comparison between one's own performance and that of the others, often peers, who are generally considered as a model of success.
3 Verbal persuasion: self-confidence in this case is directly connected with feedbacks and acknowledgments about the individuals' ability to cope with situations and to achieve goals.
4 Physiological and emotional state: the perception of self-efficacy could also be informed by personal physiological and emotional states that become a sort of filter to interpret strengths, vulnerabilities, and weaknesses, thus ultimately influencing action.

Closely related to self-efficacy is the concept of self-regulated learning. Self-regulated learning can be understood as a "transversal competence" that helps individuals in the management of their own learning (Graham, Harris, & Reid, 1992; Ananiadou & Claro, 2009). Self-regulated learning is another very important soft skill as long as learning on demand is currently becoming a type of lifestyle (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007). Yet, Montalvo and Torres (2004) believe that people with self-regulated learning skills tend to consider themselves as agents of one's own behavior, to

recognize learning as an active process, and to be goal-oriented. There are many strategies of self-regulation and, mostly important, these can be actively learned and improved especially through social media (McLoughlin & Lee, 2010; Smith, Salaway, & Caruso, 2009; Solomon & Schrum, 2007; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012). In a recent report about the relationship between digital media and learning, Davidson and Goldberg (2009) consider self-regulated learning as one of the ten basic skills for the future, since it is positively related to many other important soft skills. Indeed, self-regulated learning encourages individuals to set their own goals, to emphasize collaboration, negotiation, scaffolding, thus contributing to design more challenging learning situations.

A specific expertise related to self-regulated learning is the sense of agency meant as a cognitive and behavioral ability people have to transform knowledge and skills acquired in the learning process and to adapt it to any specific demands of the context, thus showing a mastering of the situation. In light with the challenging demands posed by the current organizational contexts, "agency will help people to shape their own lives and futures" (Yamazumi, 2009, p. 213), thus preparing them to be resilient and ready for any kind of difficulty.

4   Learning and developing skills through technology: from individual to "social" learning

The diffusion of technologies in the working context has greatly contributed to improve organizational processes and performance. At the same time, it has imposed new modes of working and learning, pushing individuals to reorganize their accustomed schemes and practices.

In this context, the debate about the relevance of soft skills becomes particularly salient as long as it could be fruitfully connected with a reflection on the affordances granted by technology to support this historic change. This union between soft skills and technology will allow to come full circle and to shift from an individual to an organizational perspective of human capital.

More simply, given the relevance of learning and developing soft skills for individuals as a personal equipment to cope with even more uncertain professional contexts, we cannot consider the individuals engaged in learning and developing skills at work as single unities, rather they

are part of a community where they actively share knowledge and practices. The output of this exchange is authentically "social" as long as it is produced by a co-construction. This "social" dimension of work experience is further emphasized by the use of technology, which actually transforms the learning modes as well. As a matter of fact, learning (also in the workplace) becomes "social" as it occurs with and from others (Bingham & Conner, 2010).

In view of this, organizations use technology to improve and sustain (formal and informal) learning adopting different tools and media.

One of the most widespread strategies is that of adopting online training, that is, using the advantage granted by e-communication (the possibility to download training contents on demand, the possibility to personalize learning, the possibility to interact with the trainer through asynchronous modes of communication via e-mail or via blog, etc.) to maximize the economic and organizational costs of formal training. Although considered a mostly traditional learning strategy, online training is not always a fruitful choice in terms of training efficacy. Indeed, what are generally underestimated are the self-regulative skills required to participate in this kind of training (Azevedo, 2008). Yet, online learning requires higher levels of responsibility in the management and in the monitoring of the progress, which is up to the participant. In this frame, organizations that decide to adopt this kind of technology-supported learning mode should be well aware of the self-regulative learning skills of its workers.

Most recently scholars in the field have attempted to conciliate the opportunities granted by new technological achievements with the needs experienced by individuals in the learning process (Attwell, 2009). Yet, the expression Technology-Enhanced Learning contains various approaches and methods to enhance learning through the proper use of technology. Examples of this effort are the Community of Inquiry and the Constructivist Learning Environment, which are both collaborative environments guided by an expert facilitator, where participants are invited to discuss about a specific topic/issue and to co-work to give a solution to a problem. These are all experimentations inspired by the Personal Learning Environments, namely, virtual contexts based on Web 2.0, where the user is central in mastering his/her own path of learning, in supporting his/her objectives, and in managing contents. Certainly the adoption of these modes of learning as said earlier with reference to

online training requires higher levels of metacognitive and self-regulative as well as of emotional skills (Dix, Roselli, & Sutinen, 2006).

Most recent challenges in the field are the online mass courses specifically called Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) that could also be labeled Connectives Massive Open Online Course Social (as in the forms of CMOOCS) when they foresee a special focus on the social networking of participants. The pedagogical potential of this kind of learning environments resides in encouraging exchange and communication between peers, in promoting exchange of resources and in improving the development of communication skills, including private/social dimension and formal/ informal learning (Siemens & Weller, 2011). In MOOC the teacher plays a lot of roles: he is an amplifier, tutor; he directs and socially manages creation of meanings; he filters, models, and is always present. The participant's success in MOOC is enabled by his ability to navigate the network, the formed personal learning environment and personal learning network as well as his personal goals. Personality development and personal learning play a central part in MOOC. This kind of learning environment is suitable for effective independent learners, who have learned to select content. MOOC can be most effective as a form of continuous education and perfecting skills. The potential of social networks (like Facebook) for professional development is an expansive topic (Pachler et al., 2012), where collaboration in online communities breaks into the real and vice versa.

Finally, very interesting are also the two- or three-dimensional virtual worlds, where users are represented by avatars, where identity, tools, and situations are managed, with interesting applications also in the learning context (Shelton & Wiley, 2007). An example is that of Augmented Reality, an emerging technology where access to digital information is connected to real-world objects. Within this kind of technology real and digital objects coexist.[4]

The broad spectrum of proposals and the combination of education and technology is represented by the proliferation of terms that are currently featuring the renewed context of learning: pervasive computing; context aware system; adaptive user model; ubiquitous network and internet of things, which introduce the theme of customization and dissemination of technology: wireless, embedded, networked computing devices.

As a matter of fact, technology is rapidly extending and creating a different understanding of the context, with unexplored implications

for training and learning in educational and professional settings. Accordingly, learning environments become a "narrative technology" (Pachler & Daly, 2009), where "people become environments for each other" (Duranti, 1992). They are actually a space for self-disclosure, supporting free self-expression, collaboration, and community building, as long as "to transform ourselves from mere social creatures into community creatures is our task (…) the only way that human evolution will be able to proceed" (Rheingold, 1993).

5   Conclusion

Workplace learning and skills development are essential for the development of human capital. Both are competitive advantages for those organizations that are willing to excel on the market. The present chapter has attempted to show the strategic role played by soft skills as part of the intangible assets that concretely make a distinctive human capital. Indeed, self-efficacy and self-regulative skills and agency have been proved indispensable as to master more job-specific technical skills and to perform successfully.

In this frame the chapter has also argued that skills are not a static capital, rather they are fluid and tend to become rapidly obsolete. Consequently, a constant attention to workplace (formal and informal) learning as part of ordinary Human Resource Management practices could help organizations to motivate and to support employees in the accomplishment of their tasks, to facilitate communication and knowledge transfer, to keep a positive organizational climate, and finally to produce a successful organizational performance.

The new developments of technology-assisted learning have been proved to be strategic allies in this effort. Indeed, the adoption of the new learning environments inspired by the Web 2.0 philosophy allow organizations to design learning contexts and opportunities that contribute to the improvement of self-regulative and metacognitive as well as of social and emotional skills that could be crucial in the management of important organizational processes. Certainly, a "one size fits all" approach could not be useful in this context as long as the mastering of soft skills is a prerequisite for the efficacy of these programs.

Notes

1   http://ec.europa.eu/.
2   http://www.ecvet-team.eu.
3   http://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu/.
4   For an example of application: https://www.youtube.com/
    watch?v=P9KPJlA5yds.

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4

Managing "Social" Human Resources: Talent Management in the "Social" Organization

Amelia Manuti

Abstract: *The chapter adds new insights to debate by focusing on the role social media might play in the strategic and global management of talents. More specifically, it investigates how new media could be a support to most traditional HRM tools in the management of some crucial organizational processes such as, for instance, career development and performance management.*

1   Introduction

As showed in previous chapters, social media could be a strategic ally to business and effectiveness. It could usefully support the processes of creating and communicating the image inside and outside the organization, of selecting and recruiting human resources, of learning, sharing, and building knowledge. In a word, social media seem to have a "natural" vocation for the implementation of people-based processes, talent management being the most prominent and crucial one, as long as it intersects with most of the earlier-mentioned organizational strategies.

Yet, talent management is a HRM process allowing organizations to select and retain the best expertise (Guthridge, Komm, & Lawson, 2008). In the past few years, a number of events, such as the economic crisis and the growing global competition, have pushed organizations to engage in "a war for talent" (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001) that consequently has relabeled this challenge as "global talent management" (Beechler & Woodward, 2009) or "talent on demand" strategy (Cappelli, 2008).

Therefore, a wide scientific debate has started on the topic. Many special issues of academic journals such as the *Journal of World Business* (Scullion, Collings, & Caligiuri 2010) and the *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resource Management* (McDonnell, Collings, & Burgess, 2011) and books such as *Global Talent Management* by Scullion and Collings (2011), *Strategy-Driven Talent Management* (Silzer & Dowell, 2010), and *Talent Management of Knowledge Employees* (Vaiman, 2010) were published.

Parallel to this, enlightened managers and organizations have started rethinking of the possibility to obtain and manage a sufficient number of highly talented individuals (also known as "valuable contributors" including high-level executives, those with high managerial potential, and those with rare technical skills) to deal with the challenge of the global talent shortage (Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Guthridge et al., 2008).

In view of this, the challenge being a global and diffused one, because of their pervasive nature, social media have come to be seen as a useful tool to improve not only communication and motivation programs as shown in the previous chapters, but also career and performance management. The aim of the present chapter is to focus

on this debate, namely, on the potential associated with the use of social media in organizations interested in implementing their global talent management (GTM) strategy. Therefore, it is evident that in addition to transforming talent management, social and digital technologies are changing the nature of work itself. Those changes have extensive human capital management implications, ranging from human capital strategy, organizational structure, and staffing to job design, training and development, performance management, and compensation. Given this premise, we will discuss some of the most relevant challenges and opportunities.

2   Social media and talent management: old challenges, new strategies

Contemporary global economy has created a complex and dynamic environment in which most organizations have rapidly learnt to compete to achieve sustainable growth. Yet, the features of the workforce around the world have changed, becoming larger, increasingly diverse, more educated, and more mobile (Briscoe, Schuler, & Claus, 2009; Friedman, 2005). Therefore, this global environment has not only changed the way business is conducted; it has also created the need for organizations to manage their workforces in a global context. The notion of a "global workforce" has received extensive attention recently (Briscoe, Schuler, & Claus, 2009; Collings, Scullion, & Dowling, 2009; Scullion & Collings, 2006). One of the major topics of this discussion has been around *talent management*. Most of the research in the area of talent management so far has been premised on the idea of talent shortages, reflecting the economic growth that has dominated until 2008 (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). In the past year or two, however, there have been numerous examples of organizations and reducing their workforces as a result of global economic and financial crisis. Thus for many organizations there now seems to be a talent surplus with unemployment increasing across many countries and too many qualified people chasing too few jobs. Regardless of economic and workforce conditions, however, organizations large and small, public and private, have come to the realization that in order to gain and sustain a global competitive advantage they must manage their workforces effectively. And to do so they must confront

the reality of *global* talent management and its many challenges and develop Human Resource Management activities to meet those challenges (Collings & Mellahi, 2009).

Within this frame, social media have proved to be a strategic tool to enhance organizational performance and to manage human capital fruitfully (Jue, Alcade Marr, & Kassotakis, 2009). Yet, the human capital implications of social and digital technologies impact virtually everyone, regardless of the type of organization they work for, their profession, their functional area, or their career stage. That means that the talent management functions in all organizations, and the professionals who lead them have a critical role to play in ensuring the efficient and effective transition and transformation from Industrial Era models and processes to the Digital Era ones.

As argued in the previous chapters, talent management as well as many other organizational processes is rapidly becoming an high-tech process. Many employment-related activities have been digitized, and there has been a corresponding increase in employee self-service. However the process of digitization that is investing the organization is very different from the digital engagement that is a necessary premise for managing the human implications of social media use.

Certainly transforming talent management requires digitization but it also involves using leveraging social and digital technologies in ways that promote and enhance communication, collaboration, and engagement – not just between an employee and the organization, but also between and among employees themselves.

In the present chapter we present some of the ways in which social and digital technologies are transforming talent management throughout the employee life cycle. However, we should bear in mind that although technology is rapidly advancing, individuals and groups within organizations are still fighting to adapt to all these transformations and to manage the cultural transformations they bear.

3   Social media and talent acquisition

This function has been already described in the previous chapters. Talent acquisition is in fact the logical place to start when talking about the impact of social and digital technologies on talent management. This is also the place where the greatest advances have been made. Anyone who

has searched and applied for jobs in the past ten years is very familiar with how technology has transformed the application process, which in most organizations (and virtually all large ones) is now almost completely digitized and automated. Job boards, like Monster, for instance, have been sided with the rise of social platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter (which are also used for job posting and advertising), as well as career site services like Indeed. Yet, nowadays social networking sites are used to match labor demand and offer, particularly for hard-to-fill roles with unique skill sets.

Besides this function, there are other ways in which social and digital technologies are impacting talent acquisition. Social media sites in particular (such as Facebook, YouTube, and Pinterest) are a great way to promote an employer's brand and offer realistic previews of work life, people, and culture in organizations. Online games and simulations can also be used to get a sense of what working for an organization would be like, and they give organizations themselves an opportunity to determine if a future candidate would be a good cultural fit and potentially successful.

Some employers are recognizing the value of digital alumni networks or communities to maintain strong relationships with former employees. One of the primary motivations for doing this is that the employees may return one day and/or make referrals to or from their personal and professional networks.

Social media have actually transformed every stage of the recruiting process in significant ways so much so that the traditional recruiting funnel can be recast in "social" terms. At the top of the funnel are activities like social advertising (i.e., placing job ads on social networks like Facebook), social sourcing (i.e., searching for candidates who meet certain criteria on networks like LinkedIn), and social referrals (i.e., having current employees share position openings with their online personal and professional networks). And at the bottom of the funnel is social screening (i.e., reviewing a candidate's public activity in social networks to identify potential hiring risks).

4   Social media and learning management

Learning management is probably the second most advanced area when talking about social media use. As with recruiting and other processes,

the initial advances are in the area of digitization, with social software applications evolving next. One of the obvious digital impacts is the increased use of e-learning and online learning platforms. There are also countless instructional videos on the web, both free and fee-based, that address a virtually unlimited range of topics. And we can't forget MOOCs – massive, open, online courses – which have proliferated in the past couple of years. Finally, many organizations have also started to use tablets and other mobile devices for learning, as well as using simulations and games to help employees develop specific skills.

In addition to offering training through a variety of multimedia channels, organizations are increasingly using a range of digital tools for assessing employees' skills. They're also allowing employees to play an enhanced role in identifying their key skill sets and training needs, and can even have them create their own learning and development plans. Allowing employees to take a more active role in their own learning and skills management enables organizations to develop and maintain a more complete and accurate knowledge and skills database, which in turn enables them to maximize the value of the workforce in which they've already invested.

Formal learning management systems and platforms are also beginning to incorporate social technologies in a variety of ways. Promoting connections and interactions among participants, as well as with the instructor, can enhance the learning experience both during and after a course. Creating course-based cohorts that allow people to continue to interact with each other via a digital community – even when their shared learning experience is face-to-face – can promote both knowledge transfer and retention, in addition to increasing commitment and engagement through interpersonal connections.

Informal learning – which is also referred to as social learning now – is greatly enhanced by social technologies as well. In fact, this is probably the greatest opportunity and area of growth for organizations of all types and sizes. Through private social networks, intranets and other internal platforms that have incorporated social technology elements, organizations are better able to facilitate employee learning as they perform their job duties and complete work activities. Along with the networks themselves, features like advanced search, identified subject matter experts, digital communities of practice, wikis and more enable employees to access and learn from colleagues who are not even in another city, state, or country.

As organizations move forward with leveraging technology to enhance learning initiatives, it will become increasingly important for

them to address issues related to digital literacy and digital competencies. Although organizations may invest in teaching someone how to use a specific application related to their job, they make virtually no investment in helping individuals learn how to use general digital tools and even e-mail. Left to their own devices, most people are much less efficient and effective at using these tools than they could or should be. As our tools get even more sophisticated, we need the foundational knowledge and skills to be able to use them well – and this foundation should probably be provided via more formal training. In other words, many people need to be "taught how to learn" in the Digital Era. If organizations aren't going to provide the formal training workers need to do that, it's probably in an individual's best interests to pursue those kinds of development opportunities on their own.

5   Social media and organizational socialization

Helping new employees make the transition into their roles and responsibilities, as well as learning the culture of the organization and how things are done, is another way in which social and digital technologies can enhance processes and improve the employment experience for individuals. For example, virtual new hire groups can be formed in an organization's intranet, with chat and/or discussion features that allow new employees to help each other navigate their initial experiences. The intranet can also be used to enable mentors to help new hires learn "how things work around here." And a variety of wikis can focus on the things that are most important for new employees to learn and know, particularly with respect to specific policies and procedures.

6   Social media and performance management

Performance management is also being transformed by social and digital technologies. Going paperless is now a standard in many organizations, but the changes are evolving beyond that. Specifically, because of more advanced technologies, performance evaluation doesn't have to be a major bureaucratic process that gets completed once or twice a year. Now managers can capture and provide feedback to employees nearly continuously, so that they always know how they're doing and

where they stand. This informal feedback can also be directly fed into the *formal* performance management process, which can help increase completeness and accuracy and minimize surprises.

Although most people are generally not so enthusiastic about performance management, new features like gamification are intended to do just that. There are a variety of software platforms (e.g., YouEarnedIt, WooBoard, Small Improvements) that digitally use game elements and social tools to enhance an organization's performance, rewards, and recognition initiatives. The goal of these platforms and tools is to increase employee morale and engagement, which in turn can increase employee citizenship behavior and job performance. What many of them offer is a social system that enables any employee to provide thanks or recognition to any other employee who has helped them or someone else in some way. Employees collect badges and points for the positive impact they've had on clients and colleagues, which can be converted into specific material and/or symbolic rewards (e.g. extra time off, training opportunities, tablets). The platforms are very flexible, so organizations can use them in a way that best fits their culture and employee populations.

7 Social media and career development

As noted earlier, new social technologies, particularly those that allow employees to create and maintain their own organizational profiles, can enhance an organization's efforts at helping employees develop themselves as professionals and manage their careers. With a more complete and accurate skills database and employees who have better tools and more motivation to engage, organizations are better able to assess the skills of their workforces and develop more sophisticated approaches to planning, staffing, and career pathing. More effective systems that are better populated with current and accurate employee data provide a stronger foundation for organizations to create more reliable and flexible succession plans.

Social and digital technologies also better enable employers to identify high potential employees by leveraging more data points, applying sophisticated analyses, and eliminating the biases and errors that can come from human judgment alone.

A case history is representative in the field. A company called Fuel 50[1] has a solution that demonstrates how digital technologies can facilitate career engagement and planning in organizations. They have taken career

counseling to new levels. With traditional, paper-based approaches, counselors guide individuals through a series of card-sorting exercises to identify their most important values, aspirations, desires, and so on. The resulting card stacks are then fed into a system and analyzed, and counselors schedule follow-up appointments to discuss the results. Fuel 50's platform not only digitizes the exercises by using tablets; it enables counselors to provide feedback and discuss the results and their implications with individuals in real time. In addition to that, the data gets fed into a system that can help an organization with staffing, career pathing, and succession planning.

8   Social media and leadership development

There are also several ways in which the implementation of social technologies can enhance an organization's leadership development efforts. Leadership blogs, for example, can help more junior leaders learn from the philosophies, styles, and experiences of more senior leaders. Leaders at all levels can form virtual support groups with their peers to discuss specific challenges and opportunities, and can also form cross-generational and cross-functional mentoring groups. Organizations can further enhance mentoring efforts by adding more opportunities and channels through which mentors and protégés can communicate with one another, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of their interactions.

9   Conclusion

The chapter has showed that social media use has been positively linked to building and reinforcing social capital. In turn, better connected people are thought to enjoy an advantage in career management. Besides simple socializing thus, online social networks have an impact on business relations. However, while HR practitioners and professionals acknowledge that, from an organizational perspective, social networking is essential for business and development, scholars highlight, from an individual point of view, that sometimes young people coming into the corporate world are not well-equipped with the up-to-date skill set (Benson, Morgan, & Filippaios, 2014). Therefore, further research is needed to better investigate how education and organizational contexts could support workers in the

development of their employability skills meant most of all as social and interpersonal skills (Archer & Davison, 2008). Accordingly, as long as the labor market changes, as long as it becomes more challenging and relies upon talents to win the global competition battle, workers need to adapt to these demands. This is congruent with a vast literature on career self-management stating that career is no more an organizational business; rather workers should engage themselves in the management of their career prospects. Social media seem to properly adapt to the new "on demand" perspective expressed both from the market and from individuals. However, even if from a merely theoretical perspective this fit (namely, the one between social media and human capital management) seems perfect, a lot of work needs to be done to change the culture of work, the mindset of workers (of both the younger and the older ones) and of entrepreneurs, who sometimes are the ones mostly resistant to changes. Our hope is that the present work could be a first step in this direction.

Note

1   http://fuel50.com/.

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5

From Theory to (Good) Practices: Human Capital and Social Media According to Human Resource Managers

Pasquale Davide de Palma and Amelia Manuti

▶

Abstract: *The chapter is entirely devoted to enrich the debate with the experience of some of the most representative HR managers in the international scenario. Indeed, it contains 17 interviews about HR practices in the era of social media, which contribute to give invaluable insights precious, both for theoretical developments and professional practice.*

1   Introduction

Drawing from the human capital theory the discussion brought about in the previous sections have been oriented to discuss the main implications of the diffusion of social media in organizational life mainly from a theoretical evidence-based point of view.

The aim of the present chapter is to try to "close the circle" by giving a further contribution that might account for the (best) practices in Human Resource Management.

Yet, 17 among the most authoritative international HR specialists have been interviewed to investigate if and to what extent they thought that social media could be the future of Human Resource Management. Pragmatically speaking, the areas analyzed were: the meaning attached to Human Resource Management, strategies of improvement, the role played by leadership in organizational strategic management, the use of social media in organizations and finally the future of human capital management.

The chapter organizes their answers according to the different sections investigated in the interview and tries to make a provisory analysis on the topic in order to give further inputs to plan and develop more accurate people-based management strategies.

2   The role of Human Resource Management in organizations

This section was aimed at understanding the role played by people in organizations and to concretely examine if and to what extent the experts involved adopt visions and practices oriented toward the enhancement and retaining of talents.

Michael Haberman is Vice President and Cofounder of Omega HR Solution (United States). He said: "My job is to teach and guide company managers in the proper way to comply with HR law and deal with employees to maximize their productivity. HR is filled with policies that restrict what employees can do. I think companies need to have policies that empower employees, that tell them how best to do great work. I think companies need to have an effective performance feedback process. You also need policies that recognize extraordinary talent beyond the standard. Policies that promote fairness, that is, antidiscrimination,

but not promoting sameness. I think assessment tools that look at people's working behaviors are underrated in making decisions about people. Use the tools to assess the people you have that do great work; then assess candidates. Do they have the same characteristics?"

In a similar vein, according to Jabbar, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development at Cafcass (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service – UK), "as HR professionals we have a unique ability to understand our workforce, and what motivates and engages them; it is then our responsibility to harness this for the benefit of the organization. There is no 'silver bullet' for HR success, but, rather, professionals should use the variety of tools and resources at its disposable to maximize the ability of its people in a manner appropriate to the needs of the business and how it operates. For my organization, this has been through developing the skills and expertise of middle managers, which has facilitated a cultural change focused on performance, health, and well-being and continuous learning and development. For other HR teams this may not be appropriate, and they may need to focus on other areas; regardless, their intentions should remain on supporting the business by focusing on getting the most from its people. Making sure the organization has the right people working in it is a cornerstone of HR, and any good HR teams should have a recruitment strategy in place that can encourage this, directly informed by the staffing needs of the company. Recruitment strategies are most effective when focused on encouraging the hiring of applicants that share the same values and vision that the company aspires to, ensuring the successful candidate would fit into the culture of the business. Individuals may have different skills, abilities, and strengths, but as long as they are committed to the organization and what it is trying to achieve, then the business can be assured of having the right person for the role. HR also has an integral role here in helping build the employer brand and developing an organization where people want to work there. This helps attract the best candidates from within the sector, making sure the company has the best talent to choose from, for the ultimate benefit of the organization."

Indeed, even Debbie McGrath, a CEO at HR.com (Canada), agreed with this people-based approach. She said: "The meaning of my job is managing the people part of a business entity. The policies that could better enhance workers' human capital are 'access to knowledge and decision-making tools.' The tool in HRM that could help you in selecting

the best human resource and putting him/her in the right place are 'social connection tools to connect knowledge with resources.' The features you generally consider important in recruiting and the basic skill a candidate should possess to work for a company are 'good communication skills and social interaction skills.'"

A further contribution came from Antonis Papachristou, a HR Director at Housemarket (IKEA) Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria. He told: "The policies we generally adopt to retain talents are 'Building Business and People together.' All HR policies must be aligned with the business strategy and interconnected in order to enhance human capital and retain talent. Most crucial are Recruiting and Selection, plus Training and Development. The tool in HRM that could help you in selecting the best human resource and putting him/her in the right place and the basic skill a candidate should possess to work for a company. A combination of tools usually has the best impact, that is, psychometric, interviews, panels, assessment center. We are searching the cultural fit more than anything else. Accountability is the most important skill/attitude."

Salvatore Falletta is President and CEO of Leadersphere and serves as an Associate Professor for Human Resource Development at Drexel University (United States). He told that "As a former Global Head of HR and based on my professional experiences at some of the world's leading high-technology companies in the Silicon Valley, I learned very quickly that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach doesn't maximize the value of human capital nor retain critical talent segments in the workplace. Organizations should segment their workforce (e.g., A, B, and C players, high-performers, high-potentials, emerging leaders) and differentiate and tailor their policies and practices in terms of what drives and engages each talent segment respectively. For example, the value propositions for intelligent and ambitious, high-potential talent are likely to be significantly different from what the average employee expects. So, if organizations truly believe in the notion that the top 10% of the workforce drives 90% of the revenue growth and company performance, they better avoid a one-size-fits-all approach and offer what really matters to their top talent. Unfortunately, many leading firms struggle with this concept either out of internal equity concerns and/or structural, cultural, or political constraints (e.g., limited budget to pay star performers more in terms of remuneration, organizational structure is too flat and therefore the company is unable to advance and promote high-potentials, cultural or political dynamics

to name a few). While such constraints are very real and understandable, the very best people will invariably leave for greener pastures. In terms of talent recruitment and selection, organizations should avoid the use of personality assessments. In my view, we live and work in a world that can be best described as 'cult of personality' whereby we place more importance and value on likability and malleability rather than competence and conscientiousness. Personality tests such as the Big Five and others can potentially get in the way of hiring the very best people. For instance, Bill Gates, Founder and Former CEO of Microsoft once said: 'You should hire for intelligence and conscientiousness and teach people the rest.' Such psychological tests position the norm as more valuable and preferable and can lead to hiring a very homogenous and frankly boring workforce (i.e., a bunch of lemmings happily marching to the beat of the same drummer). Consider this – would Google hire the late Steve Jobs, Founder and Former CEO of Apple – particularly if they gave him a personality test and used behavior-based interviewing? No way! For one, Jobs wasn't exactly normal across any of the so-called Big Five dimensions of personality and thank God Jobs had his own vision. He certainly lacked the 'Googley' factor in terms of malleability and was notoriously difficult to work with. Hence, it's reasonable to assume that Google's hiring algorithm would have given Jobs the proverbial boot. In short, organizations tend to forget about the role of intelligence and motivation. They assume everyone is the same and primarily hire for likability and malleability which is a fool's mistake. Although such factors are fashionable today, human capital leaders will ultimately lose the talent game in the long term if they continue to rely upon such measures and algorithms."

Tessa Hilson-Greener is an international Interim Director (United Kingdom). She said: "My role enables me to redefine people strategy aligned to business needs to drive better performance. This includes managing environmental stewardship, workplace responsibility, human rights protection, and good corporate citizenship. I also specialize in the assessment and definition of all diversity, inclusion, and equality plans. There are many HRM tools available to make my job more effective; in my opinion the best are the ones that are integrated to support the HR strategy, policies, and procedures. A talent management system that is central to recruitment, succession planning, profiling, performance management, and development can be the best investment an organization can make for the future."

Roberto Plascencia Carrillo is a Human Resources Director at ACERLAN (Mexico). He also underlined the role of an enlightened people-based management strategy. He told: "I feel myself blessed as HR manager 'cause I have every day the opportunity of changing my colleagues' life. A well-structured Training and Comp&Ben policies will always be helpful to enhance and retain our human capital. In addition to my experience through the personal interview, I consider DISC as a very reliable tool to make a good decision and also a good match between the person, the company, and the position. Definitively, the right attitude will always be better than only great credentials. A person with potential and the right attitude will always be an asset for the company if you are able to manage their career properly."

Christopher Bray is a Global Organizational Development & Talent Management (United States). He explained: "The focus of my work is in Organizational Development and Leadership Development. I focus on retaining, engagement, and motivation of teams and executive leadership. The most-needed aspect currently in corporations is the development of existing and future leaders. Recent studies have shown with the retirement of the baby boomers there will be a large gap in leadership positions. In preparation of this leadership deficit organizations are needing to develop future leaders in the competencies and skill sets needed to run the organizational. One of the best ways to retain top talent is to continually develop their skill sets and competencies. Employees like to be learning, developing, and enhancing their skills and then utilizing them in their everyday responsibilities. When employees feel like their organization is investing in their future they are more likely to stay with the company. The second way to retain talent is [to] understand the motivation behind each employee. If a manager understands the top motivations of each employee they can structure their coaching, communication, and development activities around those motivations. If an employee is motivated by praise and recognition and the manager is silent with the praise but rewards with financial means the employee will not be motivated and the probability that the employee will leave goes up. The best tool for selecting top candidates and then slotting them in the correct position that fits their personality, competencies, and the team is all dependent on proper and correct interviewing techniques. In the United States we are very limited in the assessments and testing we can give a possible candidate so the interview process becomes very significant. It is of

vital importance that the interviewer is trained in recognizing peak performance attributes, teamwork skills, and decision-making processes (to name only a few) to identify whether or not the candidate is a good fit. Some specific measurements and assessments I use when possible is to first understand their personality, communication, and teamwork skills. I like to provide (when possible) assessments that analyze problem-solving skills, conflict negotiation skills, teamwork skills, and personal initiative. One of the basic skills a candidate must have is the ability to communicate and work in a team concept. Most organizations can teach individuals what they need to know and do about their specific role. It is very difficult to teach someone how to communicate properly and work well in a team structure."

Another significant experience came from Jon Ingham, a people and organization development strategist (United Kingdom). He said: "All HR processes benefit by being focused on human capital which I'd define as the value of each individuals' skills and engagement, and also on social capital, which is the connections, relationships, and conversations between people. So using social media to support human and social capital is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, we should always focus on the outcome of what we are trying to achieve, that is, the human capital, not on an activities. This makes us more strategic, credible, and gives us the potential to take accountability for the value we create, which is another big benefit. We can then move away from standard HR practices which often are not that 'best' at all, and tailor our processes, practices, and policies towards the outcomes we need to create. This generally improves the quality of our activities significantly. Using new technology can also help us do this more innovatively as it helps generate more gap between what we currently do and what else might be possible and better. Social media has a particular advantage as if we want to develop social capital, there's a clear link between these two things. Recruiting is one area which is being transformed by social media. From sourcing to external communities virtual career fairs to video conferencing for interviews to gaming during assessment centers to candidate relationship management systems the whole field is being changed. And yes, this is not just about better efficiency, but also increasing effectiveness, that is, better quality candidates and even direct improvements in competitive advantage, for example, by developing a more deeply felt employer brand which transforms an organization's ability to recruit great people."

In line with such assumptions we found the position by Jesús Gallego, is a Director en Escuela de Liderazgo Capital Emocional (Mexico). He told: "As Director of Emotional Capital, I have intended to help organizations deliver the best version of themselves through people and thus I seek to inspire people – to touch their hearts with emotion, and the mind, through solid argument – to motivate change and find meaningful sense their work, offering new possibilities for their behavior, from a renewed responsibility and creating new positive emotional contexts, the organization and the people within it. The talent is retained, first, providing a purpose to the work being performed: a why and a what for distinctive and commitment. Second, creating an environment to which teams want to belong, building trust, cooperation, and responsibility; and, thirdly, by a competent, humble, and emotionally intelligent leadership. I do not consider myself an expert in recruiting tools, but in my experience, headhunters and other forms of outsourcing are very useful, as long as you know, first of all, what we seek, not only from the point technically or experience, but and above all, from an attitudinal view. The features they would ask would be passion, a high level of pro-activity, understood as ability to respond in different ways, and optimism."

Kelvin Cheatle is a Director at the HR Advisory Service at Capsticks LLP (United Kingdom). He affirmed that "the HR Director is the conscience of the organization and should ensure staff are the number one priority. I see myself as a leader and as a standard bearer-integrity, and values are all to me. All HR policies are important but the key to retaining talents in my view is investment in personal development; in my experience that is the number one retention factor – even over pay and benefits. I also think the quality of line management is key. All the HR textbooks tell you not to do it, but I increasingly have a sixth sense about what makes a good employee. I of course look for skills and job fit but, for me, attitude is key."

Likewise, Wendy Bellus, Senior Vice President of Talent Acquisition and Development, the Americas at Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (United States), told: "I believe that people are the engine of a company's success. The role of Human Resources is to work in partnership with the business to ensure that the right people are in the right positions at the right time, possessing the right skills for today's and tomorrow's business challenges. Policies that could better enhance human capital are those that allow the brilliance, or in other words, the full capability of employees to be unleashed. Policies that would support

such an unleashing are: enriched job design that allows for personal empowerment or ownership in the output; integrated goal setting that enables and allows all employees to see how their work in partnership with those of colleagues, supports the success of the organization; and performance feedback that is designed to provide constructive guidance on how to achieve greater levels of performance. But policies without a preexisting culture of respect and value for all employees throughout an organization are empty policies and will not be successful. Recognition of talent is an essential policy needed to retain talent. This translates to a lot of visibility and opportunity on the part of management to understand the each talent's career objectives and personal motivators. The tactics to achieve retention include: differentiated cash compensation programs and targeted career and professional development opportunities. I am not currently aware of a tool in HRM that I would feel comfortable with helping in the selection of the best human resources. The use of big data analysis hasn't yet been proven to me to work long term. I think the following features are most important in recruiting: (1) A highly accurate and detailed job description; (2) A diverse pool of candidates; (3) A diverse interview team; (4) A competency-based selection process; (5) An understanding of how this addition to the team will balance within the current team's competencies and styles. A basic skill a candidate should possess is learning agility."

Precious is the expertise granted by Viviane Chaine-Ribeiro who is a President at Talentia Software and at Fédération Syntec (France). She said: "Having been heading Talentia Software, a leading developer and publisher of HRIS payroll solutions for more than 20 years covering all legal aspects, it has been a pleasure to extend the company expertise to Human Capital Management through the acquisition of Cezanne Software Holding Ltd in February 2013. Both in booming as well as in struggling economies, companies are sharing the challenge to attract and retain talented individuals able to highly contribute to shaping the future. The digital revolution has provided the means to properly drive a HR strategy: (1) New and more collaborative tools allow a more detailed knowledge and optimize the sharing of information in real time between different players (Management, Human Resources, and Employees); (2) Digital optimizes HR processes and saves everyone's time; (3) The tools provide clear and relevant indicators to make relevant decisions and guide action plans for talent development and resource allocation. As for the policies that could better enhance workers' human capital,

for us, it is essential to clearly communicate within the company on the following key contributors: the Human Resource Manager or Director in charge of formulating the 'Talent Identification Strategy' in line with the company strategy defined with the senior management team, the manager who daily interacts with the employees and who is the appropriate person to assess the performance versus the objectives, the employee himself/herself who has to embrace the Talent Identification Strategy and participate in it in sharing the expected information and expressing his/her expectations for the future. This will allow the company to better understand the available skills within its human capital, the employee to actively participate in the evolution of his/her career. It is also important to acknowledge that a company can't retain a talent at a specific time of a company's life. That talent may leave and come back later on. The salary is an important part of the process of course. Then it is essential to let the employee know that his/her career aspirations are taken care of. Everyone needs to enjoy his/her job. In our opinion, the best HRM tool is the one the Human Resource Manager/Director can rely on to take his/her decisions. [What] we generally consider important in recruiting is the capacity to be a leader or not. The ability to adapt in the company environment and the knowledge and skills acquired by diploma and/or experience."

Artan Hoxha, Founder and President of Tirana Business University (Albania), he said: "The role evolves on time. In emerging markets, especially in case of former communist countries, role of HRM departments in business organizations is a recent development. In the case of Albania, dominated by micro, small, and medium size businesses, such a role is underdeveloped and currently exists only in a few number of large businesses. Negative experience heritaged by communist regimes with so-called office of cadre is still hindering the development of modern HRM. Although, big enterprises are sophisticating their organization and management style giving higher importance to HRM. The role is evolving from a routine administration of personal data to a proactive HRM including competitive recruitment, performance evaluation, training, promotion, identification of talents, and in some cases also in developing company values and promoting the sharing of such values by employees of the organization."

Accordingly, Maikel Koster, a Global Head of Recruitment Programs at Atos (The Netherlands), told: "I am working in HR recruitment and, when brought back to a one dimensional viewpoint, it is about finding,

screening and recruiting job applicants. You can invest in human capital through policies and programs. Organizations together with HR can initiate a long-term social investment strategy to excel human capital. Examples of policies that enhance human capital include offering continuous training portfolio and supporting attrition prevention programs. There are thousands of tools, assessments, and methods to select the best human resource. But it all comes down to a simple equation: the organization offers a package that suits best for the potential employee and the other way around. There must be 'a match.' From an organization point of view: Is there a cultural match with the norms and values of the company? Is there a functional match with the job we are offering (hard skills match)? Does the candidate have the soft skills to represent the organization? Is the benefits package matching up to the wishes and demands of the candidate? The basic skill a candidate should have: inquisitiveness."

Kelvin Cheatle, Director HR Advisory Service at Capsticks LLP, told: "Job meaning. I think the HR Director is the conscience of the organization and should ensure staff are the number one priority. I see myself as a leader and as a standard bearer – integrity and values are all to me. All HR policies are important but the key to retaining talents in my view is investment in personal development; in my experience that is the number one retention factor – even over pay and benefits. I also think the quality of line management is key. All the HR textbooks tell you not to do it, but I increasingly have a 6th sense about what makes a good employee. I of course look for skills and job fit but, for me, attitude is key."

Finally, enthusiastic as well as very powerful was the experience reported by Dario De Gregorio, a General HR & Organizational Development Executive Consultant (Italy). He told: "The meaning of Human Resource Management is to work with people for people is not even a job but a continuous source of excitement and fun. I feel myself very lucky to have spent almost 25 years of my life crossing the lives of other people all over the world and having had the possibility to impact, may be on a small scale, on their lives contributing to improve their quality. In addition, working in HRM means to be always confronted with people, their individualities, and their potentialities: Is there a better job? The policies that could better enhance workers' human capital? Difficult to answer because every company as every association has its own culture with its own needs of regulation. I personally think that

too many policies are a clear sign of the need of control the company wants to have over its management and workforce and, generally, it's not a great sign of its innovation capabilities. Too many policies have also the tendency to crystallize the organization, which in turn prevent talents to express themselves. One more word regarding talents: I think that, in whichever company, there are much more talents than expected, the real issue is that very often they are either doing the wrong job, or maybe their contribution is not recognized/understood in the right way or even their working conditions are preventing them to fully express their potential. In my opinion, the main mission of a HR person is to create the right conditions for everyone to fully express himself/herself. The real tool to support people selection is a clear [and] a common understanding of who the ideal candidate for that position is and what are the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved in this process. Then, there could be supporting tools like group assessments or other specific processes (I know companies whose talent selection time could get up to six months) but if the above basic rules are not respected it's difficult to have the right person on board. In addition, recruiting people is one of the most expensive buying exercise a company can perform: Which other company asset is potentially bought for 30–35 years, with a cost growing year by year? Nevertheless, very often, after the recruiting phase, a standard induction phase follows and companies who have spent time and money to find that person then treat him/her as all the others not leveraging on his/her specificities and competitive advantages. To be successful in a company a new joiner should be smart enough to quickly understand company culture and decide if it's the right one for him/her and not being afraid of leaving it if not fitting his/her culture and expectations. So, understanding his/her own core values and matching them with the company ones is a basic skill and it should be followed by a great social intelligence and the attitude of teamwork. There are no roles or jobs in modern companies who can work alone like separate monads."

3   The strategic role of the leadership

Another important section of the interview was connected with the role played by leadership in organizations and most specifically in the process of Human Resource Management. Even in this case, we

gathered very interesting and instructive experience that once more testified a sensitive approach to the value of human capital, both in words and practices.

Very simply, Michael Haberman affirmed that the role of the leadership inside the organization is "to set the example." Likewise, Antonis Papachristou said that "the management could lead only through the example. Even Roberto Plascencia Carrillo underlined the role of the "example... For good and for bad. Walk the talk and be congruent." According to Debbie McGrath, to lead is to "inspire others to live their dream". According to Christopher Bray, "Leadership is the ability to inspire, motivate, and guide individuals to work towards a specific end goal. Excellent leadership is the ability to create leaders along that path who can then take over with the next goal."

In a similar vein, Jabbar Sardar said that "what leadership will look like in practice will vary between organizations. Some companies may have very visible leaders who act as the face of the company, whilst others may have more silent, passive figures. What will be consistent, however, is that they will embody the values and culture of that organization, to which other employees can aspire to. Consequently, a leader is not necessarily related to seniority, but in the ability to inspire those around them and engage their colleagues in the ideals and goals of the business. As HR professionals, it is our responsibility to ensure that there is leadership at all levels of the organization, building a consistent set of values, developing a single culture across geographies and teams, and ensuring that all staff are coordinated and working together to help the business succeed."

Some other HR leaders took an alternative and iconoclastic perspective from a traditional and stereotyped view of leadership giving their own reinterpretation. This is the case of Salvatore Falletta. He said that "I'm not a big fan of the dominant leadership paradigm – namely transformational leadership model or its ego-maniacal offshoot 'charismatic leadership.' Organizational leaders have exploited the dominant leadership paradigm for years and at great expense to the workforce. Contrary to what many leadership gurus purport and what's popular in the leadership development industry, I prefer a transactional and Darwinian leadership approach in terms of managing people in the workplace. Let's face it; the psychological contract between employer and employee was eviscerated years ago. Preliminary research that I conducted suggests that highly educated and ambitious talent and

other high-potentials are uninspired by transformational leaders and their visionary rhetoric. Top talent, rather, prefer to work as free agents whereby there is an exchange of expertise and work for a fee (i.e., a transactional exchange between the employer and employee). In terms of the nature of leadership itself, I find 'Darwinian Leadership' (i.e., how leadership is actually practiced) much more fascinating and interesting than 'Aspirational Leadership' (i.e., how leadership should be practiced). While there is a tremendous amount of research on transformational or visionary leadership (i.e., how leadership should be practiced), there is little in terms of the nature of leadership itself from an evolutionary psychological perspective."

Again linking the value of people to the value of business, Tessa Hison-Greener argued that "organizations depend upon capable leadership to guide them through unprecedented changes. Every leader is aware of the value of a well-defined business strategy. Few, however, give thought to the leadership that will be required to implement strategies that call for changes in the direction or capabilities of the organization. Without proper leadership, even the best and boldest strategies die on the vine, their potential never realized. So leadership is critical to business success and can be defined as 'Leadership is the ability to lead and inspire others to deliberately achieve a result that may not have happened otherwise.'"

Introducing the role played by social media in this aspect of organizational management, Jon Ingham added that "Leadership is doing the right thing rather than certain things right. And this is also being transformed by social media. So firstly leaders can more easily connect and stay in contact with their followers by using social media. It also helps them lead in a more human and genuine way, based upon their personal power rather than positional power which is vital in today's, post–death of deference, world. Leadership also needs to be distributed throughout an organizational population, not just kept to the top. And leaders need to think about the way that they lead through their impact on other people rather than always leading from the front."

Jesús Gallego said that "I think that leadership is the ability to inspire and influence people to build together a better sustainable destination." According to Dean Royles to lead means "to give a group of people a believable vision and hope for the future. Increasingly this about vision beyond on organization." Kelvin Cheatle said that

"is all about setting the tone for the organization. Leaders should be charismatic but more interested in those around them than their own ego. It requires courage and determination. It's nice to be important but important to be nice."

According to Wendy Bellus, "Leadership is the ability to set a strategic course, engage and derive the optimal performance from the right people, in order to achieve the strategic vision."

Viviane Chaine-Ribeiro said that "For us, leadership is the ability to motivate people and induce change at all levels of the hierarchy. It is also the ability to make a sustainable mark in the company and leave a lasting impression even when gone."

Maikel Koster underlined that "Leadership is having a well-founded vision, be consistent with it and represent it. Leadership then creates supporters which enforces the vision."

Artan Hoxha said that "The leader is the one that holds the responsibility of the most decisive and/or final decision and is self-accountable on results, being such decision either a success of a failure and, in the same time, his decision is not imposed but is embraced with trust and enthusiasm by majority of staff/members of the organization and they contribute to perform the respective tasks."

Kelvin Cheatle told: "Is all about setting the tone for the organization. Leaders should be charismatic but more interested in those around them than their own ego. It requires courage and determination. It's nice to be important, but important to be nice."

Finally, Dario De Gregorio reported that "Leadership is the attitude to set the direction, to have and share a vision and to drive the organization and the people involved towards it at the same time encouraging them to express themselves at the maximum level. A leader is not worried by cyclical checkpoints (budget approval, shareholders meeting, or, in other field, next elections) because he/she has a long-term vision (10–20 years from now) and his/her attention is totally focused there, not on intermediate points. Above all, he/she is not scared by being surrounded and working with people smarter or more prepared/professional because he/she knows that the mission or project success is largely depending on their professionalism. Thinking, for example, to sport, great trainees like Marcello Lippi or Gian Paolo Montali were technically not comparable with the players they were leading but they had the right leadership attitude to drive them towards world-class successes."

4   Is It a Social Human Capital Management possible?

A third section of the interviewed took into account the HR specialists' opinion about the role played by social media in human capital management. This section was the core of our investigation since it aimed primarily at investing if and to what extent the evidences brought about by the scientific literature and debated in the book were supported by the enlightened experience of those experts.

Michael Haberman was one of the most convinced specialist. Yet, he told that "the organization by its nature is a social endeavour. It should therefore make use of social media tools to the fullest extent possible. Social is communication, social is engagement. I think every HR professional should be well versed in the use of social media tools. There is a population of employees using SM that if HR does not keep up they will never be able to interact with employees in meaningful manner. Right now the most effective social media tools are LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. Other tools are gaining strength as well, such as Instagram and Pinterest. But remember these are just tools and may go away and be replaced by other tools. HR needs to stay aware and be prepared to investigate new tools as they develop as opposed to being behind the curve as they have been with this set of tools."

Likewise even Jabbar Sardar supported the use of social media in organizations. He reported that "at a time when technology is facilitating increasingly mobile and flexible methods of working, providing the resources for staff to build and enhance their social network has become one of HRs biggest challenges. Yet, at the same time, never have we as a profession had so much opportunity to encourage social behaviours within organizations. The importance of the social is paramount, not just for ensuring staff feel they have a group of people with whom they can talk to for the benefit of their health and well-being, but also to ensure that increasingly disparate teams remain coordinated in the pursuit of business goals. New technologies have created never before possible methods of connecting staff and aligning them to the business, to help cascade organizational messages, develop a consistent culture and set of values through teams, and ensure staff do not feel isolated from the company. HR has always been about people; understanding their needs and wants; meeting their health, well-being, and learning needs, to ultimately improve their performance. The social has always been inherent

for our profession, and should always remain so – our unique expertise is people, and whilst HR should continue to develop its strategic understanding of the wider business, supporting the workforce is where its focus must always remain. I do not believe there is a specific tool within HR that is specifically 'social'; rather, HR has the capability of making any of its tools social. For example, Performance Management could be an annual, basic discussion between a manager and an employee, where career aspiration and performance is mentioned. With effective HR intervention, however, it can become a meaningful conversation where a variety of ambitions are discussed, with actions agreed on how to achieve them and timescales set; 360 feedback tools now allow the individual to benefit from constructive advice from a range of stakeholders, ensuring the opinions of a wide group can be considered, and encouraging workplace cultures of transparency and openness. The effective use of staff networks can provide the opportunity for agreed learning actions to be provided by skilled colleagues in the organization, who can share their knowledge and skills through a centralized system. Any HR tool can be made social; it is up to the profession and the individuals to adapt processes and systems to encourage it."

Some others were slightly skeptical although they were aware about the need to fast adapt to this change. For instance, Debbie McGrath stated that "Traditionally we could do a better job. HR is typically not a first adopter so we have been slow to use social media to build knowledge bases and connect talent," while Antonis Papachristou affirmed that "the use of social media in the HR Processes, use of IT tools as all the rest. Must capitalize on the tools to achieve the HR strategy." Even Salvatore Falletta admitted his perplexities and curiosities: "I'm not completely familiar with this term or label. But I do believe that social media is a game changer in terms of attracting, developing, and retaining critical talent. For example, headhunters, recruiting firms, and staffing agencies frequently use LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media technologies to source and attract the best human capital. However, HR functions in large and small companies are still grappling with the extent to which they should embrace social media in their workplaces. Some firms use social media technologies internally to enhance communication and collaboration while other companies use various social media tools (e.g., Yammer) to pulse and measure employee engagement. While there are a number of benefits associated with social media in the workplace, permitting employees to use such technologies at work presents a

number of challenges in terms of productivity and potential abuse. In terms of abuse, there are several ethical considerations pertaining to data privacy and use. For example, a handful of companies in the United States have asked candidates to furnish their user ID and password to access private information on Facebook. Headhunters also could view a photo of a candidate on a social media site having a glass of wine or beer at a party and subsequently decide not to hire them because they appear to have a drinking problem. Unfortunately, the genie is already out of the bottle and it will likely take country-specific legislation to sort out how organizations can use such information in terms of data privacy and human capital decision making." In this vein, Tessa Hison-Greener admitted that "Human resources management involves more than recruiting, hiring, and compensating full-time employees. Most current HRM functions also concern themselves with the health and well-being of all staff members and their concerns. Employees in businesses of every size demand that their employers pay attention to societal issues. In addition to growth and financial success, organizations have become accountable for their impact on society and the environment. The HRM function must be concerned with delivering positive results related to the company's people, the planet, and the long-term profit. As such, HRM plays a role in environmental stewardship, workplace responsibility, human rights protection, and good corporate citizenship. As such, HRM plays a role in environmental stewardship, workplace responsibility, human rights protection, and good corporate citizenship. Tools include Corporate Social Responsibility aligned strategy, diversity, inclusion, and equality policies and standards."

Roberto Plascencia Carrillo, on the contrary, underlined that the use of social media should be connected with "a higher commitment to be more than just an operator. Be an active part of the strategic plan of the organization, not just in terms of obtaining a profit but also to contribute with your human capital and the community to obtain a better context. From my perspective, sooner or later, it will be naturally inserted (probably it is there already in many organizations now) as part of HR well-being. Talking about a percentage is sterile cause it will depend on each organization's needs."

A further confirmation of the values attributed by HR specialists to social media came from Christopher Bray who affirmed: "I am a strong believer and proponent for Social Human Resource. This will become more important in the next decade as those who are currently in their

twenties begin to take on leadership responsibilities. The world is communicating and watching via social means and if Human Resources wants to stay engaged with the employees they serve the need to lean towards a more Social HR. The most effective tools currently for Social Human Resource include apps that are on the phones and computers of all employees. While utilizing mainstream social media such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others, the creation of internal apps and programs that HR can utilize to not only send out the HR message, but also to provide a constant flow and stream of information to the employees in more ways than just written form. Videos, animation, case studies etc. can all be utilized to complete the HR connection between employees and the HR department."

Likewise, the contribution by Jon Ingham also confirmed this position: "I think the term can mean different things. I think some people mean the people who are at the centre of an organization's social capital, that is, are heavily networked with other people. And it's also a term for the activities we've been reviewing – HR performed using social media, and/or to create social capital. It is also possible for social HR to refer to HR activities which are just done in a more team-focused way, for example, reviews of team rather than simply of individual performance. Social HR is, or should be, a big thing. HR has and is transforming beyond recognition – and this applies to just about everything we do. A focus on human capital and the use of social media are both core elements of this change. The most effective tools are the right ones for a particular requirement. I'm not a fan of particular tools; I support the tool which best meets a particular need. It's for this reason I don't personally spend much time tracking new tools as they come along. Understanding technology is important but it's still not as important as being able to develop good strategy, or having the creativity to use a particular technology in a new way to meet a strategic need."

According to Jesús Gallego social media for organizations are "a way to stay in touch, create opportunities for collaboration and sharing knowledge, information and expectations. It should be a real tool to engage, give prominence and engage people which builds and strengthens a personal brand and the organization itself. I am not sure, but I think that the most effective social media in organizations are those which generate engagement with employees, in which they can participate and feel confident to share."

Most HR specialists underlined the natural vocation of HR to concile with social media. This is the case of Dean Royles who stated that "HR

has been and always be about people. We operate in a social era, and HR must lead in this area and maximize opportunities for more and deeper engagement. This will be a growing part of what we do. For the next few years it will grow exponentially. It will use the same tools for other virtual social interaction. These will be in addition to, not instead of. Twitter is key and LinkedIn is significantly underutilized by HR, particularly in terms of recruitment and employer brand." Similarly, Kelvin Cheatle added that "social media is a key to improving engagement and buy in to organizations. It can mean using social media to recruit but also to use tools (FB etc.) to communicate and engage. Organizations can also leave a huge imprint because of their social responsibility policies, where HR should lead. There are many tools but social networks CAN BE a good thing if harnessed properly."

Given their versatile functions in HR management, Wendy Bellus emphasized that "Social Human Resource Management could start with the branding of the worker and/or the company via social media. While on the surface personal branding might seem a superficial marker of talent, it can suggest the degree of a person's influence and professional connectivity. These factors alone are not a full measure of an individual. However, these factors along with a review of the person's technical competence and professional capability can prove to be very meaningful in assessing relative capabilities."

This view was also shared by Viviane Chaine-Ribeiro who affirmed that "In our opinion, Social Human Resources involve: to respect diversity at all levels including the balance senior/junior associates at the recruitment time, to know well the individuals forming its Human Capital and the ability to make them grow, to properly assess the achievements versus the objectives, to well handle the out-boarding process really understanding the reasons behind it. Be ethically and civically committed while taking into account the company strategy and its values. The most effective tools for Social Human Resource Management are the outcomes from the annual performance and their proper analysis the 'People Review,' which is the place to share, arbitrate, and consolidate the talent selection process. Talent is a matter of comparison. From the information collected, the people review permits to share data, compare individual results, and determine the company talents based on the company and business needs. The 'People Review' is thus a real space allowing formalizing discussions between managers and Human Resource Departments. This is also where stands the added value of the

Human Resource Director who initiates, pilots, and confirms the choice of the key talents of the company at a certain period of time. It deals with women and men whose career paths will be considered with the view of retaining them within the organization. To achieve that goal, the Human Resource Director will have to be supported by efficient HCM tools and solutions to structure the process."

The same position was expressed also by Maikel Koster who reported that according to him "Social HR integrates HR with social media technologies and collaboration tools to enhance our recruitment and HR output. As social media becomes more embedded in our business, HR starts to leverage Social HR in a strategic and operational way. The most effective tools depend on the functionality you are looking for. For finding candidates with a specific profile, existing social media platforms like LinkedIn, Xing etc. will help to identify a (part of a) potential long list."

Artan Hoxha said: "I think that the key question is not 'Is it possible?' but 'How to use more effectively?' SM for HRM. We are forced to use SM as a tool as people nowadays are communicating much more frequently and much freely through SM. This will grow up exponentially. It is to be expected that traditional tools of communications, including e-mails, will not work at all with more and more people. I see my students. They do not pay attention to written announcements. They do not read regularly either e-mails. Some of them never open their e-mail account. Young teachers also. Seems easier to communicate with them through SM such as FB or LinkedIn. The answer for the key question is not at all easy. But I think there is a path, that is, to use the communication through SM – a virtual one – in such a manner that it becomes as similar as possible to a real eye-to-eye communication among two or more real people in a real place. Easy to say, difficult to be implemented, but not impossible."

Kelvin Cheatle said: "Is key to improving engagement and buy in to organizations. It can mean using social media to recruit but also to use tools (FB etc.) to communicate and engage. Organizations can also leave a huge imprint because of their social responsibility policies, where HR should lead. There are many tools but social networks CAN BE a good thing if harnessed properly."

Finally, Dario De Gregorio commented on the necessity to rethink to the most traditional communication strategies as long as a radical cultural change has been carried on by the advent of social media both into society and organizations. He said: "I Googled Social Human Resources and I practically found nothing specific... yes, a lot of occurrences related to HR

and Social Media or HR and Corporate Social Responsibility but that's just a part of the picture. In the vast majority of companies worldwide, there is a great disconnection between what employees experience in their day-to-day life and how they're forced to behave at work. What is simple, immediate, performed with few clicks on their smartphone in their life becomes long, bureaucratic, and time-consuming at work. In addition, talking of HR, this social and digital divide could be even more striking because it influences much more employees' life. A contemporary HR should (I'd prefer the word 'must') use a social approach in everything it does: tools, languages, collaborative approach, communication, and knowledge sharing, management of employees strengths and support to their personal issues, smart working, and understanding of where vital competencies are. This could be achieved promoting a company culture truly social; this should primarily start in HR (and top management of course) who should be the key driver of this change. Human Resources Management should be a basic attitude common to everybody working in an organization; it's a philosophy that should be part of every worker (manager or not, independently by his/her hierarchical level and seniority). HRM going social is the perfect solution to fill in the gap related to people still not owing this fundamental approach because it focuses everything on people, their relations, their growing habits of sharing their lives and experiences. In this perspective, extending this social habit to working life can be simple and immediate if part of a shared and common working philosophy, the tools for Social Human Resource Management. Firstly, consistency and clarity of messages, being open mind at every level and a real 'social' culture throughout the organization. Secondly, a strategic approach which should drive the company in order to be focused on individuals and not on organizational charts and titles and to recognize and promote talents and teams. And, ultimately, a working environment (also physical) that promotes and encourages this approach."

5 And what about the future of Human Resource Management?

A final section of the interview investigated the role played by Human Resource Management in the future.

According to Michael Haberman,"The future of HR is to keep the focus on Human Capital Management. Yes compliance will always be an issue,

but finding the right people, engaging them, making them productive, supporting their efforts to improve, helping them gain knowledge and then retaining that knowledge is where the future of HR will be." Then the centrality of human capital was further amplified by the experts interviewed.

Yet, even Jabbar Sardar expressed his agreement with this position by saying that "the future of HRM should continue to align itself with the business. Significant improvements have been made in the past decade, but there is more work that can be done as a profession in ensuring HR is supporting the organization in a more strategic manner, and directly assisting it in achieving its goals. New technologies provide more opportunity than ever for HR to prove its value to other functions, and, in particular, the financial impact its interventions can have for the business. Its focus, however, must remain on people; it must not lose sight on using these new opportunities to help its workforce and its people, as it is through this where HR drives its value. I think the future for HR is one that is very exciting, with more opportunities now available for the profession than ever before. It is up to us though as professionals to realize this opportunity."

Debbie McGrath reported that according to her the future should be "a more connected workforce," while Antonis Papachristou said that "social media like Yammer and LinkedIn are the future." Salvatore Falletta said that "the future is bright for advancing human capital management. We're making significant progress, for example, with Big Data and human capital analytics (see 'In search of HR Intelligence' in People & Strategy, Falletta, 2014). In addition, we're seeing new and emerging technologies that are quite promising, and more importantly, organizational leaders are increasingly realizing that the value of human capital as a strategic source for competitive advantage rather than lip service for the popular press." According to Tessa Hison-Greener, "Human capital management (HCM) is an approach to employee staffing that perceives people as assets (human capital) whose current value can be measured and whose future value can be enhanced through investment. I believe that this is a necessary metric to build business cases at board level, and will be used in organizations in the future, especially when trying to justify a return on investment for training."

Roberto Plascencia Carrillo affirmed that "the future of HRM is a bright one. Communication is already the trigger for many outstanding results in the organizations' performance and HCM role is basic to achieve them."

Accordingly, Christopher Bray highlighted that "the future of organizations and Human Capital Management is always going to be the employees who lead and work in the organizations. I believe the need for top talent is only going to increase as younger generations have more choices for educational experiences than just a college degree. As individuals become more specialized in their fields of expertise they will demand more development, higher salaries, and more responsibility. Organizations will no longer be able to provide development with a one-size-fits-all plan. It will need to be done in a more individualized approach."

Again Jon Ingham stressed the relevance of a people-based strategy: "the future of HCM is to the centre of business. Businesses compete, succeed or fail depending upon their people. HR isn't just about execution, though it is about this too. But it's about also having the right people and culture – human and social capital – which will provide an advantage over a company's competitors. I think we sometimes forget this within HR and assume we have to focus on the rest of the business in order to be strategic. Actually the opposite is true. The only time we can be truly strategic is when we are focusing on our people – and the human and social capital which they could provide – if managed and treated in the right way."

In line with this position, Jesús Gallego affirmed that "the future I see with greater responsibility in organizations, as a strategic partner of the CEO and the rest of the steering committee, where their voice is not a voice, but the most important, because [they] handle the most important capital of an organization: its people. That's what will help all persons working in HR department aware of this importance and serve their peers, their client, with the same passion and dedication that make the rest with its customers and may be as tangible and value your work if service providing outsourced HR is not possible or would be a competitor for the quality of service and productivity thereof."

And Dean Royles said: "As we operate in an increasing global world, common, agreed matrics will be increasingly important, and how we demonstrate the values of people management practices and policies. For many organization understand the workforce data will be their competitive advantage." Kelvin Cheatle commented on the most recent economical crisis by saying that "the recession was bad for people and

bad for HR – the bottom line and accountants ruled. Now that is ending. I think there will be a return to good HR values – nurturing people, leadership, and HR at the top of the organization. No organization can work without good HR and that lesson is being relearnt now. Organizations that invest in staff will always succeed."

According to Wendy Bellus, "as the demand for a knowledge labor pool increases, the demand for a strong Human Capital Management function will grow. Learning, management, and leadership development will be even more essential key business functions." And Viviane Chaine-Ribeiro followed her underlining that "Human Capital Management has become an obligation because jobs change today. At present, we only know a quarter of tomorrow's jobs and needed skills, and only 25% of associates are working in the field they were initially trained for. HCM software and solutions provide the tools to collect, analyze, and build strategies."

Maikel Koster pointed out that "organizations that distinguish themselves on policies and programs will harvest their investment in human capital, supporting in attrition programs, offering continuous training portfolio etc. But also contribute to the 'match' on the four criteria mentioned in the answer on question 3. Be conscious of what the immense role of HR can be and can contribute to performance, as the utilization of the increasing options, tools, and information by (social) HR is still growing. It means HR shows its added value."

Kelvin Cheatle said: "I think the recession was bad for people and bad for HR – the bottom line and accountants ruled. Now that is ending I think there will be a return to good HR values – nurturing people, leadership, and HR at the top of the organization. No organization can work without good HR and that lesson is being relearnt now. Organizations that invest in staff will always succeed."

And finally, Dario De Gregorio reported that "Human Resources is experiencing a tremendous revolution that should bring a department used to manage, in a lot of cases, only payroll and few other processes to be the key player of the company development and success. There's no alternative to this change: either it will happen within the HR department – succeeding in reshaping its identity – or someone else in the organization will try to do it, with a different approach and different tools and probably with a different result that the company may not be able to sustain in the long term."

6   Conclusion

The chapter has allowed to find empirical evidences to support the main line of argumentation of the book. Human capital is a priority for organizations. Not only from a scientific and theoretical point of view, as showed in the previous chapters. It is a fact for many HR specialists, for some of the most authoritative ones in the international panorama. Therefore it is an "embodied" evidence.

The extracts reported from the interviews showed very clearly the role played by human capital as a strategic intangible asset of the organization. Moreover, results coming from these valuable experience confirmed the significance attributed to some milestones in Human Resource Management: the importance of an enlightened and empowering leadership, the coherence between visions and practices, the relevance attributed to tools and practices oriented to organizational learning and development, and finally, but not least important, the centrality given to social media. Actually, within the last decades they have showed all their potential as strategic ally with the function of Human Resource Management. Of course moving between their lights and shades, between enthusiastic and cautious positions the trip that our guests have allowed us to experience encourage future scholars and practitioners to engage in a further exploration of the multiple possible relationships that social media may entertain with Human Resource Management, this being also one of the main aims of the present book.

7   HR specialists Bios

Wendy Bellus is currently Senior Vice President, Talent Acquisition and Development for SMBC Americas, a global financial services firm. She has worked in human capital management and leadership development since 1990 with areas of expertise in leadership development and training and learning. Previously, at Rabobank International, a global financial services firm, she held various positions including Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion/Regional Head Americas, Management Development, and Regional Head of Human Resources. Prior to that experience she performed a variety of human resources specialist roles at Citibank, NatWest, and Merrill Lynch. Wendy holds an MBA, with a concentration in Human Resources, from the University of

Massachusetts at Amherst, and received her BS, business administration with management concentration, from the State University of New York at Albany. Wendy is a certified executive leadership coach, career coach, and diversity trainer; he has several assessment tool certifications and holds leadership positions on the Tri-state Diversity Council and the Financial Markets Total Rewards Group.

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Chris graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a PhD in Organizational & Adult Development. He also holds an MBA and a degree in communications. He will finish his second PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology in 2015. He resides with his wife, five daughters and a son in Gilbert, Arizona. Chris is an avid triathlete, marathoner, tennis player and loves to hang out with his kids. He is also an ice cream connoisseur.

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of Syntec Numérique (French Digital Association) since 2009, Viviane Chaine-Ribeiro became the first woman elected President of the Federation Syntec in July 2014 (the Federation Syntec includes the Digital Industries, Engineering, Surveys, and Consulting firms ... and represents 80,000 companies, 910,000 employees, and €120 Billion turnover). For all of her involvements, Viviane Chaine-Ribeiro was awarded Officer of the National Order of Merit and Knight of the Legion of Honor.

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Dario De Gregorio was born in Rome 51 years ago and graduated in International Relations. Dario De Gregorio has 25 years of top management experience in the Human Resources (Telecom Italia, Bulgari, and LVMH) and is an expert of reshaping organizations above all by reshaping people. He is highly interested in social media and new digital technologies above all for their impact on companies and people management. After a long and successful career in the luxury world, he decided to pursue a new independent professional career to support companies (above all small-to-medium ones) in using advanced tools to improve their Human Capital Management performances.

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Tessa Hison-Greener is an International Interim learning director and change manager responsible for implementing complex and multifaceted HR transformation initiatives through to successful completion. She has broad organizational development experience working closely with top

leaders and board members to define and implement Innovative change initiatives. Her key strengths are making sense out of chaos and her last three roles have been to lead teams back to operational strength providing clear direction, motivation, and focus. Tessa has redesigned business areas to perform more effectively and is responsible for the introduction of new HR technologies, reinvigorating the current talent management approach, and redefining the education landscape whilst reducing costs. She has a strong commercial background which gains instant credibility at all levels with budget management in excess of £70 million and effective leadership of large divisions of employees she has a proven track record of organizational change. Tessa thrives on new challenges and draws on her broad international experience with E.ON, Gilead, Astellas, Siemens, Xerox, British Airways, FedEx, Canon, SITA, (BMW) Rolls Royce, and Toyota. She quickly and effectively understands business key drivers for success and utilizes this knowledge to design and deliver innovative people development strategy. Workforce planning including cost reduction initiatives, organization effectiveness, organization redesign, and the analysis of people risk. Tessa has program managed innovative executive development (Japan, United States, and EMEA) with DUKE CE, INSEAD, and ESMT. She has introduced education linked to leadership competencies and business strategy with leading industry lights. She recently led the design and delivery of a new diversity and cultural awareness program for the 2014 E.ON leadership conference for 500 board and executive teams receiving excellent feedback and positive change results in unconscious bias.

Artan Hoxha is Founder and President of Tirana Business University (TBU). Former Minister of Trade and Economy in Albania (1992–1993), President of Institute for Contemporary Studies in Albania, Mr. Hoxha is contributing from 20 years as local experts, often as team leader, for the development of key government policies and laws in areas such as economic development, social development, public administration, decentralization, fiscal and regulatory system to businesses, education, and others. He is active in Albania media through articles and TV debates. Currently, his major engagement is with TBU aiming to build up a high qualitative business school in Albania.

Jon Ingham consults with organizations to help them gain more impact from their investments in people management and development. Jon's work with clients often focuses on developing new capabilities (primarily

human and social capital) as vital sources of competitive advantage. Jon describes the approach he suggests organizations follow to develop human capital (the value of employee skills and engagement etc.) in his book *Strategic Human Capital Management: Creating Value through People* (2006), and on his blog "Strategic HCM." However, in more recent times, Jon has focused on helping organizations develop social capital (the value of the connections, relationships, and conversations taking place in an organization), which can be supported through community-based leadership; team-focused HR practices; organization, and job design; organization development; community management; team facilitation; internal communication; workplace design, and the use of social media/ Web 2.0 tools, and so on. It is also this focus on social capital that has led to Jon's broader interest in social media. He uses social technologies himself extensively and has also worked with a range of clients helping to integrate social media into their HR and organizational management processes, particularly within recruitment, learning, and communication. In these projects, Jon works with his clients to implement the new technologies, processes, and cultures that are required in this change. Jon is often perceived as a leading online influencer in HR and was recognized as HR Examiner's number one top global digital influencer in talent management in 2010 and one of HR Magazine's most influential UK HR thinkers in 2011 and 2013 (in seventh place). He has spoken at leading HR conferences around the world, including SHRM's annual conference in the United States, HRPA in Canada, and AHRI in Australia. Prior to his independent role with Strategic Dynamics, Jon worked as Director of Human Capital Consulting, Europe for Buck Consultants/ACS; Head of HR Consulting for Penna; HR Director for Ernst & Young (working firstly in the United Kingdom, and then, based in Moscow, covering the former USSR); and Andersen Consulting (now Accenture) as an IT, then change management consultant. Jon has a BA in Psychology, a Masters in Engineering, and an MBA and is a Fellow of the CIPD. He has lectured in strategic business management, change management, and human resources on executive MBA courses and is a faculty member of Cotrugli Business School

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Debbie McGrath founded HR.com in August, 1999. HR.com is in business to help build great companies by connecting them with the knowledge and resources they need to effectively manage the people side of business. As the global authority, HR.com delivers HR best practices to help organizations build great companies through community, collaboration, research, shared best practices, events, and measurements. Debbie has an extensive background in HR, publishing, and the internet. Previous to starting HR.com she owned the CEO Group, a Canadian and European entity that created job board software, talent management software, *HTC Career Magazines*, and High Tech Career Fairs, which was sold to the *Washington Post* in 1998 and is now part of IBM/Kenexa. Debbie has a degree in computer science and business administration, which she earned at the University of Guelph.

Antonis Papachristou, who from August 25, 2008, is the Human Resources Director of Housemarket SA (IKEA Franchisee for Greece, Cyprus, and Bulgaria), is an experienced HR professional with previous positions in UCB Pharma SA, Fiat Auto Hellas, Eurolease, and the companies Tefin, Unitbank, British Providence, and Inchape Insurance of the Inchape Holdings Hellas Group. In the past he was the Operations Manager in the Pouliadis Group, the largest group of companies in the IT industry in Greece. Mr. Papachristou has a Master's in business administration, minor in HR Management, from the University of Kent, and he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Greek Personnel Management Association.

Roberto Plascencia Carrillo is an executive with more than 20 years experience as a human resources generalist. Husband, father, and son of solid families, and he believes that kindness should always be above of any kind of violence or aggression.

Dean Royles was previously Chief Executive of NHS Employers appointed in December 2010. Previous roles include Director of

Workforce and Education at NHS North West and Deputy Director of Workforce for the NHS at the Department of Health. Dean was the first HR Director at East Midlands Ambulance Service following its creation in 1999. He has also worked at an acute hospital and in a community and mental health trust having started his HR career in industrial relations in a local authority. Dean has an MSc in human resources. He is a member of Sheffield Business School's Advisory Board and also a visiting fellow at Newcastle Business School, Chair of the Board of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, and a chartered fellow for the same organization. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Bradford for his contribution to health services management. In 2011 Dean became the first male business champion against domestic violence and is a national ambassador for the Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network. He is a regular conference speaker, has published in a number of journals, is on the editorial board of HRMJ, and provides expert opinion in the national media. He was voted UK's Most Influential HR Practitioner in 2012, 2013, and 2014. Dean is married with four children and lives in Sheffield.

Jabbar Sardar joined Cafcass (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service) in October 2006 and is the Director of Human Resources and Organizational Development. Over the past eight years, Jabbar has been instrumental in supporting the CEO in transforming the way in which the organization delivers its services and develops its staff. Key achievements for the organization led by Jabbar include: Reducing levels of sickness amongst Social Work–qualified workforce from 16.2 days in 2009–2010 to 5.8 days in 2012–2013, with a corresponding reduction in the cost of sickness absence from £3.3m to £1.8m in this period; Improving the engagement and support provided to staff through an innovative Health & Well-Being Plan; Launching a Talent Management Strategy for all staff to encourage development opportunities and grow the expertise in our workforce; Leading on supporting cultural change amongst employees; Innovative leadership and management development programs to support succession planning and talent management; Helping staff to understand their contribution, efficiency, and training needs through a tool (named "MyWork") launched from 2013, which provides bespoke information to each member of staff every time they log in; Revising the HR/Payroll IT System, ensuring 90% that of all HR processes are now online and reducing administrative burdens

on managers, and simplifying our HR policies to support more effective people processes; Rationalizing our estate to reduce in the number of offices from over 90 in 2006–07 to 43 in 2013–2014; In 2013 Jabbar was shortlisted for the prestigious *Personnel Today* HR Director of the Year Award. In 2014 he was voted the sixth most influential practitioner by HR magazine, as well as finishing fourth in the readers' poll; Prior to joining Cafcass, Jabbar worked as a Senior HR professional with a number of large public sector organizations.

Conclusion

Amelia Manuti and Pasquale Davide de Palma

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The aim of this book was to argue for the strategic value of social media in organizations adopting the perspective of human capital management.

Our main objective at the beginning of this work was to reconcile the theoretical psychosocial results coming from the scientific literature with the evidences testified by practitioners' and professionals' concrete practice.

Yet, each theoretical chapter documented how the main organizational processes referred to human capital management (e.g., internal and external communication, recruitment and selection, learning and development) could sustain this management option.

However, the discussion brought about by these contributions showed that, though apparently useful to control and manage people at work, the use of social media could also be a potential obstacle for organizations.

In this final section, we would like to go a bit further analyzing these aspects and to give HR specialists and professionals concrete inputs to plan actions addressed to this specific objective.

Accordingly, within the past decades, abundant research has proliferated around the topic, and the public opinion has engaged a wider debate about these evidences. However, as it generally happens when a new radical change is introduced into society and consequently into working organizations such discussions risk to become banal and to mirror a social rhetoric according to which "new is always good," if not anchored to a serious analysis of the organizational complexity.

Then, according to us, several organizational complexity factors should be taken into account before introducing social media into most ordinary human capital management practices. Accordingly, each management decisions should carefully consider an analysis of the people involved, of the organizational structure, and of the cultural context actually framing these new communicative practices.

Let us start from the features of the people involved.

An important reflection is connected with some basic features such as gender, digital competence, and age of the workers directly involved in this new practice, supposing they will be active agents and coparticipants.

Most research on gender, for instance, has documented a difference between men and women in using and participating in social media, showing women to be more proactive than men (Barker, 2009; Chou et al., 2009; Lenhart et al., 2010). Similarly, research on the development of a digital competence has highlighted how social media use could

contribute to enhance self-regulated learning, showing people able to connect the formal and the informal learning granted by social media as best performers (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012). Finally, age also was proved to be a key point, stressing the difference between the so-called app generation (Gardner & Davis, 2013) and the older workers. Yet, the advent of social media has contributed to redefine rapidly the categories of workers, creating a wide gap between workers aged between 30 and 45 (whom the literature considers paradoxically as mature workers) and those aged up to 30. Of course, the category of workers older than 45 is nearly neglected by this kind of research studies (Schalk & van Veldhoven, 2010). A very interesting aspect with reference to this factor is the evidence showed by most studies (Carr, 2010) that there is a huge cognitive difference between users' age categories in terms of adaptability, flexibility and rapidity of response that inevitably needs to be addressed when organizations plan to use social media to improve their competitiveness.

Then, given all those evidences, the use of social media poses to our attention an old question: the digital divide (DiMaggio & Hargittai, 2001). Actually, social media could dig a huge gap between generations of workers who hardly could be filled in. On the one stand the digital immigrants and on the other side the digital natives (Prensky, 2001).

A second important factor highlighted by the book is the relevance of the organizational configuration of the context that chooses to use social media as a strategic tool. Actually, the form that the organization has given to itself is not merely a structural objective factor. It contributes to shape its organizational identity; it generates and generates back strategies, decisions, plans, investments; it is the core of the organizational tangible assets influencing significantly the intangible ones. Therefore, the organizational structure is not a secondary element when deciding to adopt social media to improve organizational effectiveness. Actually, beyond the organization of work, the division of labor, of tasks and responsibilities, there are many tacit assumptions about how to manage people, how to invest money, and how to challenge the market. These assumptions although tacit are well known to all the members of the organization. This is the reason why the adoption of social media, for instance, in a working context dominated by a hierarchical and rationalistic model, could not seem a convenient move. Although featured as a positive news in their working life, workers would be probably disoriented and maybe resistant to use them as required as long as they are

mainly used in top-down and passive interactive practices. Different could be the case of organizational contexts using lean and circular model of work organization, implying a diffused leadership and a more autonomous management of work.

Finally, a last monitor should consider the role of the organizational culture. This element has been underlined magisterially by the experiences of the eminent HR specialists interviewed in the final chapter. Yet, in this vein, social media could not be considered absolutely a good or a bad option for organizations: it depends on the cultural and on the organizational conditions that feature their context. More specifically, most of the research reviewed has referred to big multinational companies, and few are the examples described by small and medium enterprises. Therefore, again what is important before introducing this new communicative and management modality is an accurate analysis of the needs and competencies of the people involved. Organizations should focus on the strategic construction and communication of a cultural view coherent with this new aim, which could be able to sustain workers in the difficulties implied in any form of organizational change. The attunement between the image that the organization conveys to the public (i.e., values, norms, policies, etc.) and the identity the workers daily experience "living the context" is a fundamental predictor of the success of any management choice. Therefore, if social media are perceived to be a strategic value for the organization the management should be careful in sharing these intentions and aims with workers as well as in showing through facts, decisions, and actions what such option really means.

Looking back to our aim and making a retrospective analysis of what has been discussed we can conclude that, far from giving any final recipe, the use of social media in organizations could be a valuable choice. It could also be strategic if attuned with a people-based perspective of human capital management. What is central is that the use of social media as well as any other specific management option should be coherent with the cultural practices that daily animates the organizational life. "People come first" should not be simply a claim to motivate workers and/or to attract customers and stakeholders; it should become part of the credo of the organization; it should become the "root metaphor" (Smircich, 1983), inspiring the story that the organizations and its members tell to each other and to each potential interlocutor, inside and outside its borders.

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