Barbara Mróz-Gorgoń

Resources and competences - their role in shaping the image of franchise networks

MUZEUM HISTORII POLSKI

Barbara Mróz-Gorgoń Ph.D.
Wroclaw University of Economics

RESOURCES AND COMPETENCES – THEIR ROLE IN SHAPING THE IMAGE OF FRANCHISE NETWORKS

Summary

An organization, such as a franchise network is the place where individuals come together in teams, creating stable social networks. Within such a network particular individuals learn and accumulate knowledge in collaboration with others. An organization is therefore an environment that favours accumulation of knowledge. In today's global, multicultural, dynamic and competing world, leaders in an organization need to achieve better results with less resources available. They need creativity and far-sightedness to grasp new ideas and aspirations adequate to our restless and changeable environment. Effective global leadership can both cope with risks as well as take advantage of existing opportunities and therefore provides prospects to achieve permanent business success.

Introduction

Creating the image of both a franchise network as well as any other entity is effected through the use of appropriate actions. These actions can be implemented thanks to the resources a given entity owns or disposes of. In order to implement the above mentioned actions in life it is necessary to delegate competences. Resources, competences and actions contribute to an organism which we call an organization. The purpose of this paper is to show the role and importance of resources and competences in creating the image of franchise networks.

In every organization processes most often take the form of actions. Although an action should have some features of autonomy, in a franchise organization it has a special dimension; a franchise network is a common organism created by many entities, and the staff administering inside of them. Each employee's actions affect the functioning of an organization as a whole, therefore,

in this dimension they affect the entire network (e.g. through actions related to creating the image of the network brand). The second group of intentional components of an organization are events. Eventful components of an organization are these of statistical nature, that is goals, tasks and the events of kinetic nature and constituting a derivative of a processes, and therefore functions. Together with processes and events the sets are the intentional components of an organization. Sets as elements of an organization take the form of: job positions, organizational cells and organizational units of higher level. One more level can be distinguished in a franchise network – the central network cell, which acts as a guardian of all standards and of uniform functioning of all franchise organization units. Relationships determine the uniformity of the components in an organization, their internal links and the structure. If relations can take the form of relationships and interactions, then within an organization such as a franchise network, interactions occurring between real entities are the main object of interest. They constitute a specific binder binding organizational units in terms of a common goal. They also determine the type of their interaction and relate to both the reinforcement and informative the integration. Shaping the relationships within an organization is the setting of a communication process understood as sharing information among people through the use of symbolic messages.

The specificity of franchise networks

The essence of an efficient operation of a franchise system is to treat all members of the system (both franchise suppliers, sub-franchisees and franchise recipients) as a jointly created organization. "In an institutional sense, an organization (Greek – organon) is a deliberate social group, disposing of particular means, which operates according to certain rules and principles, working together – to achieve a particular goal. The essence of an organization is the awareness of the principles, rules, mission, goals and the synergy."[1] The most important aspects of the organization are: power, information and cooperation. "An organization is a sufficiently separated from the environment entirety of the human action aimed at achieving one or more goals."[2] L. Krzyżanowski, by indicating typologies arranging the distinctness of an organization from other beings, uses the concept of social systems.[3] He defines them as a distributive set

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[1] S. Galata, *Podstawy zarządzania nowoczesną organizacją. Ekonomia, kultura, bezpieczeństwo, etyka*, Difin, Warszawa 2007, p. 16.
[2] http://www.oxford215.pl/konspekty/PZ_definicje.pdf.
[3] L. Krzyżanowski, *Podstawy nauk o zarządzaniu*, Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1994, p. 166.

of material and technical (physical), social (psychophysical) and cultural elements, arranged by means of a three-tiered relation: the material, social and cultural basis. As emphasised by G. Bełz, a systematic approach in the sciences of management and organization is also related to a well established, although difficult to calculate, synergistic effect.[4] It should be noted that one of the main assumptions and reasons for the creation of franchise concepts and their implementation in the form of a franchise network is the synergy effect itself that is achieved through cooperation and specific coexistence of multiple entities as a single organism. As emphasised by B. Iwankiewicz-Rak, a company is an organization which has its autonomous goals and characteristics that distinguish it from the environment.[5] In its internal organization the interests of individual employees and the entire company as an organization intertwine. The condition for a franchise company's efficiency and effectiveness is the integration of these objectives. Experiences of companies that have been successful demonstrate that success factors and company objectives and the success factors and employees personal goals are closely related to one another. Lack of integration of the organization (company) participants around its objectives and the indifference of the organization to individual goals causes divergence of interests and low efficiency of the management system expressed by difficulties in achieving the company's objectives. The primary problem is to organize the company in such a way to enhance full integration of the interests of the employers and employees. However, this requires the knowledge and understanding of the essence of the company's successes and the personal successes of the employee and their mutual relations. According to A. Kałowski, building an efficient organization, including the franchise system, in the era of strong market changes is the key to success.[6] The thesis that organization efficiency can be the source of corporate success is true if it is based on the following principles: clear delegation of decision-making powers, proper flow of information, harmonized incentive factors and at the end an appropriately designed structure.

Thanks to competences and their delegation it is possible to quickly respond to the changing environmental conditions and to anticipate future tasks in this

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[4] G. Bełz, *System zarządzania jako regulator odnowy i zrostu przedsiębiorstw*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego, Wrocław 2011, p. 50.

[5] B. Iwankiewicz-Rak, U. Kałążna-Drewińska, *Marketing w handlu*, Wyd. Akademii Ekonomicznej, Wrocław 1999, p. 35.

[6] A. Kałowski, *Sprawność organizacji źródłem sukcesu polskich przedsiębiorstw*, in: *Zarządzanie strategiczne w praktyce i teorii*, red. A. Kaleta, K. Moszkowicz, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego, Wrocław 2010, p. 153.

scope. The organizational method should trigger the employee initiatives and should motivate to identify oneself with the company through adequate allocation of decision-making powers and reduction of centralization. All organizational solutions should create conditions for the employees personal development through the articulation of their development paths. Fast response to changes in the environment requires not only efficient information systems but also such an organization that will ensure the use of developmental opportunities and the anticipation of possible changes that are adverse for the organization. Organizations are specific systems, different from machines or biological organisms. As stated by J.R. Schermerhorn, Jr., an organization, starting from a large corporation to a government agency and a local convenience store open 24/7, is a collection of individuals cooperating within the scope of delegated jobs in the pursuit to realize the common goal.[7] The aim of every organization is to produce goods and/or services satisfying the consumers' needs. This ability to bring something useful to society is what justifies its existence. Franchise chains are open systems, which means that they process the inputs taken from the environment into the outputs in the form of finished products and/or services, and in connection with the above the ultimate test of an organization's business activity is the market. A franchise chain is created by many separate entrepreneurs and the franchise concept donator (franchisor) so, due to this difference and the number of organisation members, the most significant element of creating a chain image is building a coherent image of a given franchise brand. In building such a coherent image of a franchise chain, the most important element is human capital and in particular competent managers of particular chain units who are responsible for continuous and permanent control of the adherence to the norms stipulated in the so-called operational manual as well as the supervision of other employees who should also abide by the standards of service in a given chain.

Franchise network – image creating

A franchise chain, as any other business organisation, has at its disposal a variety of resources, competences and skills. The problem and – at the same time – the biggest challenge of franchise chain managers is finding the resources, skills and other assets distinguishing a given chain from the competitive ones, which makes a given franchise format unique. Building the strategy and competitive advantage on the basis of the resources held requires defining

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[7] J.R. Schermerhorn Jr., *Zarządzanie. Kluczowe koncepcje*, PWE, Warszawa 2008, p. 21.

which of them are unique and in what way they, as well as the remaining ones, can be used in order to increase profitability and to enforce the market position of a given franchise. The process of creating the image of a franchise network requires the adoption of such a method of action in the market that combines in itself both the innovation of ideas, such as advertising campaign creativity and compatibility communication with the values professed by the network and the actual operation of certain franchise format. Lack of compatibility between the social aspects of the company's activity and its planned business activity could lead to a situation where the social aspects of the activity not only do not support the sale of goods and/or services but also adversely affect the sale. It can be stated that a franchise company not only performs a production and marketing function but it is also a kind of a social institution. The role of a company as a social institution is reflected in the planned and ongoing impact on its subjective environment. At the same time a mutual concordance between the interaction and the business activity that supports this interaction is ensured. An important element of this phenomenon is the so called feedback effect that is the impact of the environment on the company. Such a relation is called the "feedback." This phenomenon has two aspects, first, the subjective environment impacts the company, which is the cause of its certain decisions that aim at adjusting the company to the environment, and second, people responsible for PR usually strive to get to know the subjective environment by performing or commissioning to perform a study on this environment. What has been called the "feedback" of the information provided to the environment is on the one hand enforced by the entities of the environment, on the other – by the company itself. As emphasised by S.M. Kania,[8] the precondition of a positive feedback is the compliance of the culture with the strategy, which means on the one hand – setting the direction of the organizational culture formation and development through the strategy, on the other hand – the culture constitutes the framework limiting the processes of the strategies design and, already in the initial stage of the strategy formation, should be perceived as a variable limiting or facilitating the realized process. As a result of the company's communication with its environment entities and under the influence of information on the company from other sources, the image of that company is shaped, both in the company's internal subjective structure – that is HR, as well as in the subjective external

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[8] S.M. Kania, *Kultura organizacyjna jako kontekst w procesie budowania strategii organizacji*, in: *Zarządzanie współczesnymi przedsiębiorstwami. Uwarunkowania strategiczne, innowacyjne i kulturowe*, red. T. Falencikowski, Vol. 7, Wyższa Szkoła Bankowa, Gdańsk 2010, p. 215.

environment. This phenomenon is closely linked to the creation of the brand of an organization, whose special case are the franchise networks.

Leadership in a franchise chain

The franchise chain's internal environment consists of its owners, management board, employees and the work environment. Permanent staff of many organizations, including franchise networks, are organized in trade unions that, for the managers, constitute one more layer of human resource management complexity, and in some cases, of the management in general.

Today a manager to be able to function efficiently in a dynamically changing environment should think and act in a systemic way and perceive the organization he leads, as a system. According to B.R. Kuc and M. Żemigała,[9] an organizational system is made up of various subsystems and interactions within them as also between the whole organizational system and other systems in the macrosystem of the organization's environment. Picturing an organization as a system has brought new quality into the management theory. Intellectual and moral duty of a today's manager is to see the world of an organization in the categories of functions and relations as overlapping and complicating systems internally which do not lack contradictions. Management of contradictions becomes a specific kind of specialization of the new era of managers.

Many Polish franchise networks and franchise concepts originating from other countries of the "old continent" begin the expansion from seizing the European market to emerge in the wide ocean of the global market. It is necessary that a manager managing an organization of this range goes beyond a parochial understanding of competition within the economy of certain country to be able to successfully compete in the European market. In the professional literature we find the term "euromanager." By definition it is a "modern manager from Western European countries, operating in a highly competitive market, an individual ready for the challenges of the next century, able to look to the future, work conceptually and act with a long term perspective."[10]

Very difficult and new challenges await the managers of the new era. Euromanagers must stop thinking only locally and start taking the roles of a European player and master of complexity, which will help in the implementation of

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[9] B.R. Kuc, M. Żemigała, *Menedżer nowych czasów. Najlepsze metody i narzędzia zarządzania*, Helion, One Press Exclusive, Gliwice 2010, p. 85.

[10] J. Szaban, *Przemiany roli polskich dyrektorów w wyniku zmian ustrojowych. Od dyrektora do euromenedżera*, Wyd. Wyższej Szkoły Przedsiębiorczości i Zarządzania, Warszawa 2000, p. 243.

the European business strategies. Today's manager of an organization, corporation or franchise network must operate effectively in an intercultural environment. Every manager, to be able to achieve success in the task and social sphere should have, like every employee of an organization, specific competencies and skills. "One of the first, and also popular typology of managerial skills, was presented by R.L. Katz, who identified the following types:

- conceptual skills which largely depend on the manager's abstract thinking skills thanks to which he understands the general principles of the organization's functioning and its environment,
- technical skills that is those which are necessary to perform certain tasks within the organization,
- social – interpersonal skills (human skills) that is the skills of establishing, maintaining relationships with individuals or groups but to understand, motivate, lead them, etc."[11]

Based on observations of today's managers and the forecasts of the future business and global economy development, J.M. Soroka[12] recalls the features, skills and attitudes of a future manager that are frequently quoted in professional literature. These are: openness to changes, willingness to accept innovation and innovative thinking, resistance to defeats, failures and stress, positive visionary thinking (thinking in the long term), making quick analyses of the synthesis of phenomena, easy rejection of the existing rules and images and adopting new solutions, associating issues, phenomena and things that are far from each other, assertive action and communication, rational assessment of the possessed resources and thinking in terms of finances.

A very important factor that determines the success of a modern manager, leader is the awareness and understanding of the relationship between the power and influence. This implies another important assumption, namely that the function having a great importance for the position of a manager of such a complex organism, which is the franchise network, is the leadership. It may be noted that the traditional approach to leadership based on the experience of the army where orders and control used to dominate ceased to be effective. It should be emphasized that at present we are in the phase of the process of evolution from the post-industrial culture to informative culture. Creation of knowledge, its storage and use becomes the primary economic task influencing social changes,

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[11] M. Jasiukiewicz, M. Oczachowski, J.M. Soroka, *Menedżer – przywódca w organizacji gospodarczej*, Wyd. Akademii Ekonomicznej, Wrocław 2007, p. 71–72
[12] *Ibidem*, p. 80–83

and the workers for knowledge (knowledge workers) overcome the traditional boundaries of the nations and science disciplines. The basis for the organizations of the future, which include franchise networks, will be the global culture and it will be managed by global leaders. Knowledge and education will become the source of success. Global managers aware of their role and competences, flexible, walking away from bad cultural habits and at the same time open to intercultural cooperation and ready for permanent improvement will be sought and appreciated.

One of the most important elements of management is the control, which plays a particularly important role in the management system of such a complex organism which is the franchise network. M. Soroka points out that social control mechanisms function in a different way from the process of the control within an organization.[13] Social control operates actually in a latent and spontaneous way. Whereas the control within an organization, although to some extent it is based on social control – occurring in every community, and the people in an organization form such a community after all – is, however, of an open, planned nature and is implemented by particular individuals having the authority enabling them to exercise the control. In case of franchise concepts the control functions are, among others: causing people's behaviour to adjust to the requirements of the organization and its objectives taking into account the principles contained in the franchise manual, coordination and order of various interests and dispersed activities of members, determination and evaluation of discrepancies between the plan and its implementation, indicating the causes of this discrepancy, causing remedial steps and/or corrective actions to happen, suggestions concerning opportunities to improve the way of performing the work.

Every manager can create his own style of control. His choice may be based, among others, on four factors: management style, organization style, measures of performance and the willingness to participate expressed by the subordinates. In case of franchise networks, the most important measurement of control leading to improvement of the effectiveness of an organization is its continuity. Only constant and continuous control and correction of irregularities isolated during this process can provide improved functioning of an enterprise and thus have a major contribution into maintaining a strong market position of the organization.

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[13] *Ibidem*, p. 178–187.

Resources of an organization

In order to examine separate phenomena occurring in franchise chains it is required first to extract its component elements which, considered as separate particles, do not constitute the essence of the organization. Although, it should be noted that the final shape is affected by these components. They decide on the nature of the organization, its image.

According to L. Garbarski, I. Rutkowski and W. Wrzosek resources are the basic element of internal conditions of a franchise company's activity.[14] Resources are the degree of company's equipping in materials and financial means and staff. The state of machinery and equipment, the state of retail chain, the structure and qualifications of the staff, the size of financial means, etc., form a set of conditions within which the company prepares and runs its activities in the market. The size of the above mentioned resources affect the formation of marketing structures. It cannot be formed so as to require more resources than those currently available (including the possibility of their increase in a given time).

From the point of view of the marketing structure shaping, of crucial importance is not the absolute amount of resources in a company, which is always limited in relation to the needs, but the more or less limited possibilities to regulate the structure of these resources. These restrictions may affect the possibility to choose the instruments, tools and the undertaken marketing actions. Although marketing shaping does not directly concern resources they determine its structure – this determines the efficiency and effectiveness of the management processes in general.

In the economic literature many concepts concerning component elements of an organization can be fund. One of the best known, most frequently cited and widely accepted is the H. Leavitt's concept of organization's elements. This "diamond model" presents a very general picture of an organization and the character of separate phenomena occurring in it cannot be picked. In order to obtain a more complete picture of the relations occurring between the organization's elements, their description should be sought not only in the outline of the management science but also in modern philosophical concepts. The concept of R. Ingarden distinguishes the following ontological categories: things, processes, sets, relations, events and features. These categories can be applied to an

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[14] L. Garbarski, I. Rutkowski, W. Wrzosek, *Marketing. Punkt zwrotny nowoczesnej firmy*, PWE, Warszawa 2000, p. 87–88.

organization.[15] Some of them are of the nature of absolute beings and have their empirical exemplification in an organization: these are things. The others are a kind of intentional objects. These are the kind of imponderables, whose existence is existentially dependent on these absolute beings. They should be sought within categories such as processes, sets, relations, events and features.

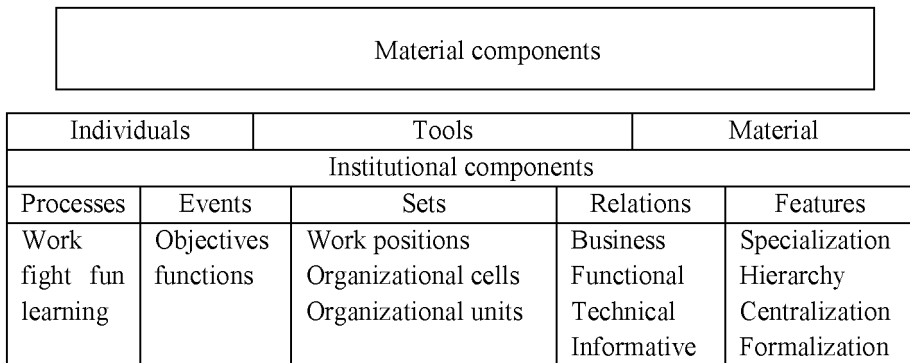| Material components				
Individuals		Tools		Material
Institutional components				
Processes	Events	Sets	Relations	Features
Work fight fun learning	Objectives functions	Work positions Organizational cells Organizational units	Business Functional Technical Informative	Specialization Hierarchy Centralization Formalization

Fig. 1. Ontological vision of an organization

Source: *Organizacja i zarządzanie. Podstawy wiedzy menedżerskiej*, red. M. Przybyła, Wyd. Akademii Ekonomicznej, Wrocław 2003, p. 33.

According to M. Przybyła, material components of any organization, and thus the franchise networks, are: individuals, tools, material, that is the so called absolute beings.[16] An individual as a component part of an organization is not only the "means" of an organization to achieve its objectives, but also an objective itself. His association with an organization should than be considered in two aspects. On the one hand, the organization sets its requirements to an individual to make him act in accordance with its objectives. Therefore, in the analysis of an organization member behaviours, the limitations determined by the role played by him towards the coefficients and the organization as a whole should be taken into account. However, on the other hand, an individual's demands towards an organization should be considered, which are influenced by both the general human needs and the individualized needs. Observing the operation of franchise networks, which largely occur in the service sector and, therefore, it is the people (personnel) who constitute one of the most important components of their operation, it can be concluded that the employees have become a decisive factor for the survival and development of a company. Ac-

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[15] J. Huizinga, *Homo ludens – zabawa jako źródło kultury*, PWN, Warszawa 1985 after: *Organizacja i zarządzanie. Podstawy wiedzy menedżerskiej*, red. M. Przybyła, Wyd. Akademii Ekonomicznej, Wrocław 2003, p. 33.
[16] *Ibidem*, p. 33–40.

cording I.H. Buchen one of the methods to test the central position of employees is to check to what extent they affect the company's identification system.[17] For example, instead of the usual slogans proclaiming the company's vision and mission (which are often so vague that it is difficult to guess who they represent) one can imagine a different version of HR (human resource): a declaration of a vision that identifies and supports the overall company's objectives concerning the work results, and the declaration of mission that explains in detail the implementation of the vision – and all this in the form of preferential description of positions. Combining and application of both of them would sum up and direct to some of the most important company's functions: recruitment would be more precise, retention would be more suited to the needs, employees assessment more directed, trainings specifically focused, and the connection of objectives and roles lasting. First of all – on the outside and on the inside the company would be consistent. The inner knowledge of individual departments would shape the external company image. These declarations of the HR vision and mission would sum up the organization's self-determination in terms of the employees central position. Due to the fact that the success of the franchise format depends on meeting the standards in all units of a given franchise chain, the most important resource of a franchise chain is then, apart from staff, the know-how of a given franchise chain. It is therefore essential that the operational manual, which should contain all the standards of a given chain such as CI elements, the description of client brand service, procedures, training and control programmes, should be very detailed and present the character of a given franchise. New franchisees are introduced in the characteristics of a given franchise format through various training and courses so that they could further instil the idea of a given franchise brand in their employees. It thus should be stated that the know-how provided for in the operational manual becomes the attribute of an activity through people who jointly create the image of a given franchise chain brand.

Competencies – the concept

The concept inherent in human resources is the concept of competences. "Competences are the knowledge, skills, abilities, operating style, personality, professed principles, interests and other features that used and developed in the process of work lead to achieving results consistent with the strategic intentions

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[17] I.H. Buchen, *Partnerski HR. Nowe normy rekrutacji, pracy i szkolenia dzisiejszej kadry pracowniczej*, Wolters Kluwer business, Warszawa 2011, p. 21–22.

of a company."[18] As stated by T. Rostkowski,[19] the term "competences" owes its current popularity to the search for new solutions that fit the challenges awaiting a company in relation to the growing global competition or to the treatment of knowledge and information as the capacity to more effectively compete in the market. The search resulted in the creation of a competency based management. Systems based on skills are called skills-based systems. There are two basic types of skills whose development a franchise company should be in particular interested in and whose development should be supported: horizontal skills – an employee learns to perform his task and with achievement of high practice he can handle the operation of a larger part of the manufacturing process than the others or work more productively than other employees, and vertical skills – an employee masters to the excellence not only his tasks but he is also, for example, the first link of the company's quality control. Competency based management gives a chance to solve fundamental problems of the human resources management, since it enables an integrated approach which is especially important for such a complex organism as a franchise network. Implementation of the competency system leads to acquiring new skills, according to the assumptions of particular models, and thus to the increase in the quality of human resources. The increase in quality takes place only when the competency model is consistent with the company intentions described in the company's strategy and with other requirements specific for a particular organization. An integrated approach allows for making optimal decisions and for proper allocation of resources, which is also important in case of running a franchise company. It also allows for individual treatment of particular persons – company employees while simultaneously being able to aggregate information for the needs of the companies' managements strategic decisions in the scope of adjusting current company competences to the needs of the future.

Human resources in a franchise network

One of the most important resources of a franchise chain is people. The concept of a franchise format is based on the repetitiveness of client's impressions and feelings connected with making use of the services of a given franchise chain. In this particular case, this is not a single outlet but frequently the

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[18] *Jakość zasobów pracy. Kultura, kompetencje, konkurencyjność*, red. A. Sajkiewicz, Poltext, Warszawa 2002, p. 90.
[19] *Ibidem*, p. 90.

number of chain units is given in thousands. Creating identical interior in all chain units and guaranteeing an identical supply quality is a half of success of a given franchise brand. The most important factor of image coherence is just the manner of service which – particularly in the case of franchise chains – should be standardised and should include the element which would make a given brand stand out from other brands. Such a model is called "client brand service" and the franchise chains coming predominantly from the United States of American and Great Britain attach particular importance to this element of creating the coherence of their image.

As emphasised by B. Iwankiewicz-Rak,[20] a specific role of the human factor in the process of service provision, franchise networks are largely service providing units, caused that some authors distinguish service personnel (people) as a separate, fifth instrument of the marketing mix. The manifestation of the extension of the range of marketing tools for the services is also giving special dignity to material conditions of the service process (the so called physical evidence) as a marketing instrument and to the service process itself (process).

People responsible for human resources management in an organization such as a franchise network must accept responsibility for indicating the direction of its development so that it will increase its value. According to D.D. Dubois and W.J. Rothwell, the success of the competency based project depends to some extent on its implementation plan.[21] A detailed plan a person in charge of the company's HR should follow is as follows: step one – setting the organization's business goals and customers' needs, step two – to carry out the analysis of the environment, step three – to indicate the key sectors for the customers, step four – to synchronize the organization's business goals with the customers' needs, to determine the project goals, step five and six – to guarantee customers' support for the project goals and to make decisions as to the next steps, step seven – to develop the project management plan indicating the method of its implementation in the longer term, step eight – to implement the project management plan, step nine – to make developmental and recapitulation assessments. It seems that human resource management procedures based on competences that assist, encourage and support the achievement of best results will

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[20] B. Iwankiewicz-Rak, *Obszary zarządzania marketingowego w organizacjach pozarządowych w gospodarce rynkowej*, in: *Problematyka marketingu w procesie adaptacji do warunków gospodarki rynkowej w Polsce*, red. A. Styś, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego, Wrocław 2010, p. 140–141.

[21] D.D. Dubois, W.J. Rothwell, *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi oparte na kompetencjach*, Helion One Press, Gliwice 2008, p. 82–91.

dominate, in the future, the personnel management. Human resource management based on competences provides the HR department with the best tools to use the leadership position to generate this value. In addition to human resources, another important component of the organization, especially with such a specific structure as the franchise network, is the culture of the organization. According to A. Kożuch,[22] the superior objective of human resource management in the enterprise is subordinate to the chief objective of the whole enterprise which is to ensure constant growth of the goodwill, and thus maximize the profit, enabling not only to further reproduce processes but a constant development of the company. Today's trends in human resource management are oriented to transformation of human resources into capital as a factor that to a high degree creates the company's goodwill. The capital are the people permanently associated with the company and its mission, able to cooperate with creative attitudes and skills. Human capital constitutes the company's development drive, it covers for all motivation opportunities revealed as a result of effective organization management, oriented to the company's mission and strategic objectives. The professionalism of personnel decisions is one of the main principles of an organization's management and control over people. Building effective teams can take several years and shaping the employment suitable for the purposes of an organization, such as the franchise network even longer. Human resources (personnel) are distinguished from other resources by the fact that they become an unreliable element in an organization when the management is inappropriate, that means it does not take into consideration to a proper degree the social and psychological spheres. Acquiring and making the right people to actively participate in the life of an organization is an extremely important element of an organization's management. This part of management is currently called human resource management, personnel management, organization social potential management, personnel policy or HR policy. As emphasised by C. Carnall,[23] the frequently repeated phrase "the most important asset of a company are people" is becoming more and more significant, not rhetorically but in practice. Enterprises will more and more often rely on small groups of people and the loyalty of these people, usually managers, should no longer be taken for granted but earned and gained by the company. The question is how to exploit

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[22] A. Kożuch, A. Dyhdalewicz, *Ekonomika i organizacja przedsiębiorstw*, Wyd. Wyższej Szkoły Ekonomicznej, Białystok 2004, p. 136–137.
[23] C. Carnall, *Managing Change in Organizations*, Prentice Hall Financial Times, Harlow 2007, p. 42.

this resource, develop the employees and reinforce the positions through bonuses and promotions that will lead to a common success.

To sum up, every franchise network as well as other business organization has a palette of diverse resources, competencies and skills to their disposal. Some of these component elements are the organization's trumps (strong sides) – mostly they are the unique resources and skills and other qualities which distinguish the company from the competition. The concept of building and implementing a strategy based on the strongest assets while at the same time liquidating weaknesses is expressed in the so called resource-based strategy. According to this approach, rare, suitable in a given situation and creating value for the customer resources, skills and competencies are the basis for building a strategic advantage of the company. However, the mere possession of these is not that important as the organization' ability to combine different types of resources to achieve a specific kind of synergy effect. The most important factor in building a strategy and a competitive advantage of franchise networks based on the possessed resources is to determine which of them are unique and how to use both, the components classified to the unique group and other resources to increase the profitability and strengthen the market position of a given franchising organisation.

ZASOBY I KOMPETENCJE – ICH ROLA W KREOWANIU WIZERUNKU SIECI FRANCZYZOWYCH

Streszczenie

Organizacja, taka jak sieć franchisingowa, jest miejscem, w którym jednostki łączą się w zespoły, tworząc stabilne sieci społeczne. W obrębie takiej sieci poszczególne jednostki uczą się i akumulują wiedzę we współpracy z innymi. Organizacja jest zatem środowiskiem, które sprzyja akumulacji wiedzy. W dzisiejszym globalnym, wielokulturowym, dynamicznym i rywalizacyjnym świecie, liderzy organizacji muszą osiągać lepsze wyniki, mając do dyspozycji mniejsze zasoby. Potrzebują kreatywności i dalekowzroczności, by uchwycić nowe idee i aspiracje właściwe naszemu niespokojnemu i zmiennemu środowisku. Skuteczne globalne przywództwo może zarówno poradzić sobie z zagrożeniami, jak też wykorzystać istniejące możliwości, w związku z czym zapewnia osiągnięcie trwałego sukcesu w interesach.

Tłumaczenie – Barbara Mróz-Gorgoń