

RECRUITMENT PRACTICES AND CRITERIA OF THE SUPPLIERS OF THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

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Abstract: *The paper has as a purpose the analysis of the recruitment activity, from a theoretical and a practical point of view, at the level of a multinational company that carries on its activity in the automotive industry. In order to reach this purpose, we have studied the Romanian and foreign literature of the field and we have taken an in-depth interview to the human resources manager. The recruitment activity is extremely important for the automotive industry suppliers, especially at the level of the county of Argeș, because here we can find the greatest concentration of such companies. Because of the problematic economic and financial situation, at the level of the county of Argeș it is difficult to recruit in this industry. In order to be able to do it, the multinational companies have to manage their activity correctly and to design successful practices!*

Keywords: *recruitment activity, multinational company, human resources management.*

JEL Classification Codes: F23, J24

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of our research consisted in presenting the recruitment activity of a multinational company. The objectives of the research had in view the theoretical presentation of the recruitment activity and the identification of the main recruitment practices and criteria specific to the Valeo Group. The starting point was represented by the Romanian and foreign literature of the field. Starting from the opinions of some renowned authors, we have made a theoretical analysis of the recruitment activity. Recruitment is arguably the most important of Human Resource functions. For economic activity to take place, the sourcing of people to provide energy, creativity and international activity is essential [5]. The importance of the research is given by its practical part, namely by the correct identification of the recruitment practices and criteria of the Valeo Group. In the future, the research can be extended to include the entire branch, by identifying the common recruitment practices and criteria of the suppliers of the automotive industry in Romania.

2. THE METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The purposes and objectives of the research could be reached to a great extent due to the use of an appropriate methodology. In this respect, we have studied the Romanian and foreign literature of the field of human resources, preserving the most important ideas that formed a solid basis for the presentation of the recruitment activity in a personal manner. For the practical part, the main tool used was the interview with the human resources manager. We have also made documentation visits and studied the documents made available by the managers of the Group.

3. RECRUITMENT IN THE LITERATURE OF THE FIELD

The first steps in ensuring a high quality work force are represented by the recruitment and selection of the employees. We can define **recruitment** as the process of looking for and finding a sufficient number of candidates qualified to occupy certain positions, from whom the most appropriate can then be selected. **Recruitment** is also “the process of generating a pool of qualified candidates for a particular job. The firm must announce the job’s availability to the market (inside and outside the organization) and attract qualified candidates to apply” [2]. In the process of selection there occurs a collection and an evaluation of the information obtained from these recruited candidates, so that, in the end, the decision of hiring the most competent of them could be made.

As many specialists in the field of human resources, like, for instance, George T. Milkovich și John W. Boudreau [4], mention, **the recruitment of the staff represents, in general, the first contact between the employers and those that want to be employed, being, at the same time, a public activity.**

That is why the recruitment of the staff is by no means a simple activity, as it is considered sometimes, because the recruitment policies and the managerial practices in this field are influenced by a series of constraints or by numerous external and internal factors like [3]:

- the conditions and changes on the labour market;
- the capacity of the systems that train and develop human resources, as well as the educational models that have a special impact on the recruitment process;
- the attractiveness of the region or of the country, as well as the local facilities such as accommodation, transport, shops;
- the legislative or legal framework;
- the image or reputation of the organization;
- the preferences of the potential candidates for certain fields of activity, for certain organizations or positions;
- the organizational culture;
- the managerial policies and practices in the field of human resources;
- the political, ethnical or other criteria that can condition the recruitment;
- the economic and financial situation of the organization;
- other factors, like: the necessity of identifying and attracting some of the potential candidates confidentially and without advertising, the existence of certain special or especially complex positions for which potential candidates are difficult to find or locate, to identify or attract.

A good recruitment allows the company to employ persons whose skills are very close to or even overlap with the job requirements. It entails that the company offers one or more jobs of a certain profile and the labour market offers individuals with various skills, capable of being hired any time. The company submits proposals regarding the job requirements and the necessary skills, which the future employee does not always possess. This aspect is very well presented in Figure no. 1.

The adaptable nature of their knowledge, skills and personalities makes the chosen persons adapt to their positions and even improve them, in the sense that they may have other qualities that will be taken into consideration in case the job is advertised again. The system job-jobholder proves to be especially dynamic and adaptable, and the employment always entails a compromise between requirements of an ideal nature and resources that are actually available, with various qualities, that do not correspond to the initial descriptions.

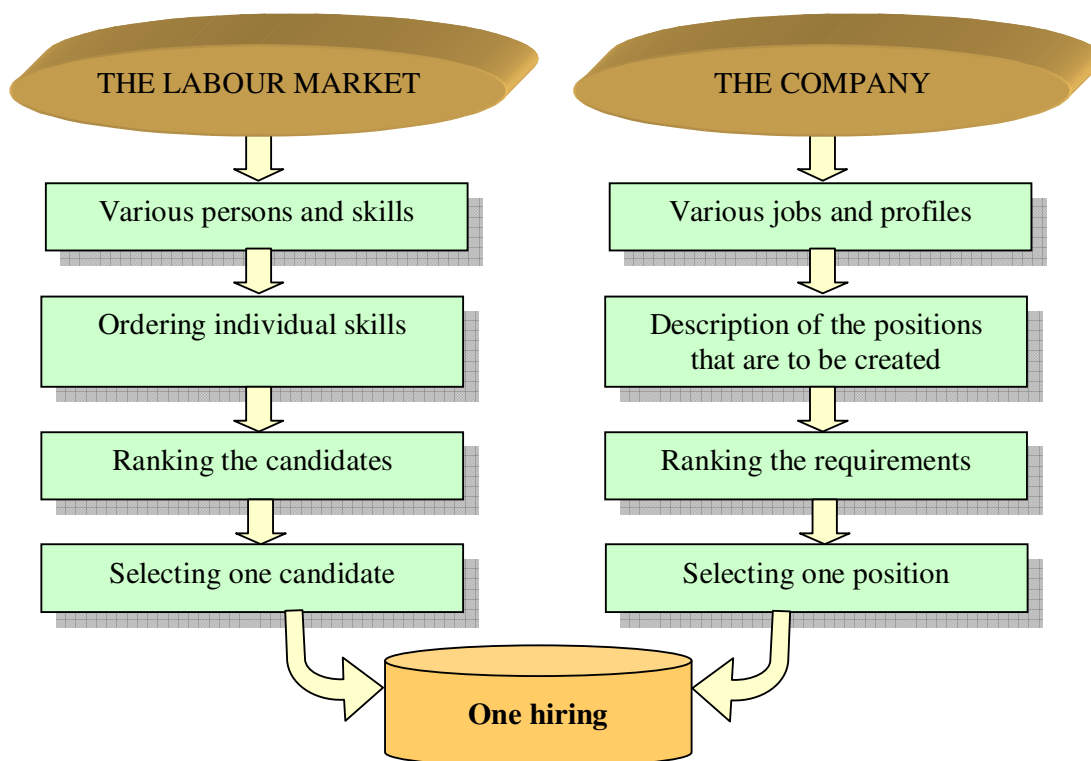


Figure no. 1. The relationship between the company and the labour market.

Generally speaking, the process of recruitment includes all steps that the organization intends to take in its search for the candidate that is appropriate for a vacant position. The presentation of these steps in a logical and structured way is rather difficult because nowadays the intellectual knowledge becomes actually the number 1 raw material of the organizations that intend to remain on top [1]. The recruitment implies the use of certain techniques and procedures that can be organized in a series or in parallel in view of carefully examining the candidates' profiles. The continuous improvement of the recruitment techniques and the search for new ones make the very clear presentation of the recruitment process difficult.

Taking these difficulties into consideration, there appeared several ways of structuring the recruitment process that try to get over the handicap of parallelisms and present this complex activity as clearly as possible.

After we have seen how the process of selection is made from the point of view of the applicants, it is important to see the recruitment practices specific to the company as well. The recruitment process refers to any organizational activity that is meant to affect:

- ✓ the number of applicants for a vacant job;
- ✓ the type of people that apply for them;
- ✓ the probability that those that apply for the vacant positions will also accept the position offered.

The purpose of a recruitment program is to ensure that the organization has a reasonable number of qualified applicants (that would find the job acceptable) so that it has the possibility to choose when a vacant position appears.

The purpose of the recruitment is not only to find a great number of applicants. If the process generates a lot of unqualified applicants, the organization will have to pay lots of money, but that will lead to the filling of only few vacant positions.

4. RECRUITMENT PRACTICES AND CRITERIA SPECIFIC TO THE VALEO GROUP

The Valeo Group has specific criteria for the recruitment of the staff. For the recruitment they usually resort to the following criteria [6]:

- ✓ *competence;*
- ✓ *length of service;*
- ✓ *the candidates' development potential;*
- ✓ *foreign languages learning skills;*
- ✓ *geographic mobility;*
- ✓ *international conception;*
- ✓ *team leader;*
- ✓ *the ability to anticipate.*

Competence has a broad acceptance, including, besides the capacity of fulfilling the tasks, other qualities required by the respective job, such as: intelligence, creativity, easiness in becoming integrated in the work groups, as well as the results obtained in the present position or in the previous ones.

Length of service. The recruitment policy adopted by the Valeo Group regarding the length of service is that of recruiting young people because they can be more easily trained and formed. Only for the executive top management positions does the company recruit persons with a certain experience, with a certain length of service.

The candidates' development potential. The group recommends the recruitment of those persons that wish to participate in the prosperity of the company, and not of those that are interested only in their salary. They look for enterprising persons that consider the clients almost their friends and do not hesitate to work an extra hour or two, or to work on their days off if this is necessary.

Foreign languages learning skills. In addition to knowing their mother tongue, the candidates for executive positions have to have a conversational knowledge of the English language because this is the official language of the Valeo Group. If the candidate's mother tongue is English, then the knowledge of another foreign language, namely French, is not a selection criterion.

Geographic mobility. The group recommends the recruitment of those persons that sooner or later are willing to relocate in the country or abroad, in order to take advantage of the opportunities that might appear in the group.

International conception. This criterion refers to the ability of working with people belonging to different cultures, of listening and of assuming new responsibilities.

Team leader. The criterion refers to how capable the candidate is of assuming the role of a leader in his/her working environment, what his/her skills are in all management aspects: leadership, training, rewarding, discipline, empowering teams etc., namely: does s/he have skills and competences in training other persons?; is s/he capable of adapting his/her level of communication in such a way as to be close to any member of the company?; can s/he transmit a negative, but constructive feedback?

The ability to anticipate. This selection criterion refers to the ability to understand the problems at a deep level, to notice and listen, to identify and implement solutions.

After the recruitment criteria have been established, the process is carried on in the steps presented in Figure no. 2.

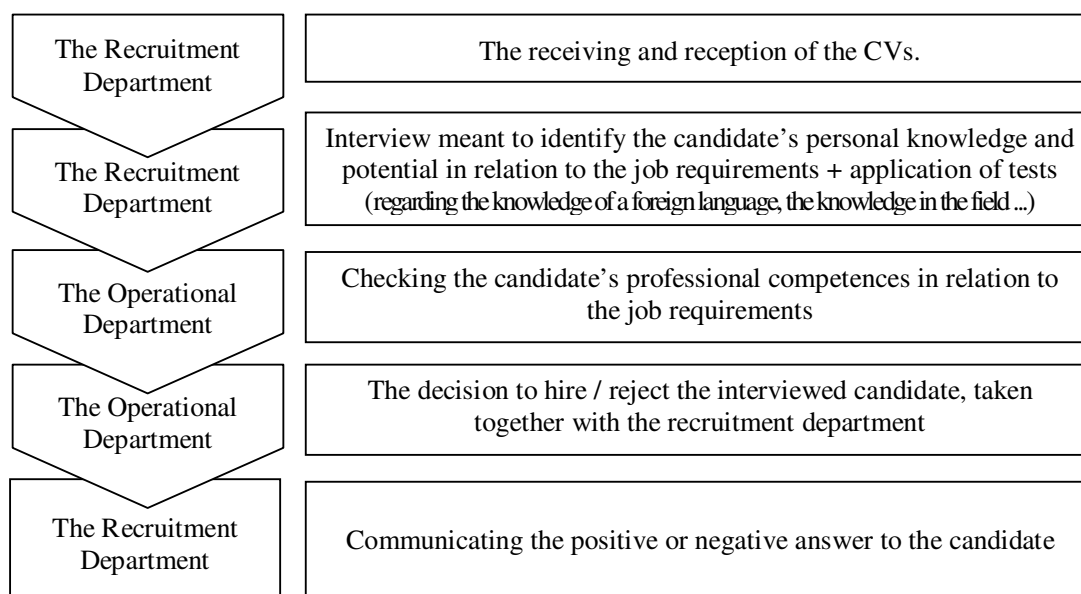


Figure no. 2 – The process of staff recruitment in the Valeo Group.

The four key-rules of the recruitment charter that the Valeo Group has in view:

➤ ***Confidentiality of the candidacies:***

The candidacy will be exploited only by the recruitment team and the personal data will not be communicated to any third party.

➤ ***Systematic response:***

In the case of each candidacy sent via e-mail, the candidates are informed immediately about its registration in the data base. Each of the candidates invited to an interview will receive an answer in maximum 10 days from the date of the interview.

➤ ***Mutual commitment to transparency:***

The responsibilities and requirements of the job are presented clearly, and the candidate is also expected to offer correct information regarding his/her personal and professional situation.

➤ ***Respect for other persons and lack of discrimination.***

Any type of discrimination is excluded, be it direct or indirect, against a candidate or an employee, for reasons connected to his/her sex, sexual orientation, genetic characteristics, age, nationality, race, colour, ethnic group, political preferences, social origin, handicap, family situation or responsibility, membership of a trade union or trade union activity.

During the selection stage, besides physical tests and medical examinations, they also apply:

- physical aptitudes tests;
- colour identification tests;
- tests meant to determine the memorizing capacity of the candidates;
- tests meant to determine their perception speed;
- personality tests.

The work tests are eliminatory during the stage of selecting candidates.

The Valeo Group chooses to combine the two recruitment sources, internal and external. All vacant positions are published on Valeo Opportunities, on the intranet network to which all employees of the Valeo Group have access. The job requirements, the competences required and the minimum level of qualification necessary to obtain the job are presented in

detail. Thus, the possibility for the employees to have unrealistic expectations or perspectives or to become disappointed or dissatisfied with the organization is much reduced.

The Valeo Group also works with a temporary work force, often used in the case of the seasonal activities, as well as during the trial period, a period in which they test the employee's skills and degree of adaptation to the employer's industrial environment.

In conceiving the career plans, the possibility of horizontal (interdepartmental) promotion as well as of horizontal promotion, at the level of the division or branch, are always taken into consideration.

Because of the economic and financial crisis, the number of unemployed people in the county of Argeş increased by 4,49% in October 2012 as compared to September 2012 and by 0,87 % as compared to October 2011. These aspects make the activity of selection and recruitment a lot easier.

Table no. 1 presents statistical data regarding the structure of the unemployed people registered in the county of Argeş in October 2012.

Table no. 1: The structure of the unemployed people registered with A.J.O.F.M. (The County Agency for the Occupancy of the Work Force) Argeş on age groups and educational levels on 31.10.2012

	Age Groups						
	TOTAL	Under 25 years old	25-29 years old	30-39 years old	40-49 years old	50-55 years old	over 55 years old
Total, of whom:	14,126	3,018	1,115	3,211	3,681	1,682	1,419
- women	6,319	1,287	472	1,544	1,797	762	457
- graduates of primary, secondary, vocational schools, of whom	9,139	802	726	2,420	2,700	1,290	1,201
- women	3,605	212	220	1,017	1,181	564	411
- graduates of high school and post-high school educational institutions, of whom	3,773	1,770	187	514	821	314	167
- women	1,933	781	114	325	514	161	38
- graduates of universities, of whom	1,214	446	202	277	160	78	51
- women	781	294	138	202	102	37	8

(Source: www.arges.anofm.ro/statistica.html)

From the statistical data of October 2012 we can notice that the total number of unemployed people registered with A.J.O.F.M. Argeş was of 14,126 persons (5,329 paid unemployed people and 8,797 unpaid unemployed people), higher by 607 persons (+4.49 percentage points) as compared to September 2012 and slightly higher, by 117 persons (+0.84 percentage points), as compared to October 2011.

At the end of October 2012 the rate of unemployment registered in the county of Argeş was of 5.51%, on the increase by 0.32 percentage points as compared to the previous month and by 0.13 percentage points as compared to October 2011.

The analysis of the situation of the beneficiary of the rights according to Law 76/2002 showed that the highest percentage in the total of the registered persons was still that of persons between 30 - 39 years old (22.73%) and 40 - 49 years old (26.06%), while, for the category of

persons under 25 years old the value of 21.36% was registered. From the point of view of their professional training, these persons are structured in the following manner: graduates of primary, secondary, vocational schools – 64.7%, graduates of high school and post-high school educational institutions – 26.7% and graduates of universities – 8.6%.

Analysing the structure of the unemployed people on sexes, the women represent an average of 44.73% (6,319 persons) out of the total number of the registered unemployed people, registering a slight decrease, by 0.27 percentage points, as compared to the percentage from the total number of unemployed people registered in the previous month.

In the present situation, when the economy witnesses a restructuring process, radical changes have appeared in the situation of the occupancy of the work force. Because the great economic agents in the county of Argeş have diminished their demand of work force, the private sector has remained the main demander of work force.

Table no. 2: The situation of persons registered with The County Agency for the Occupancy of the Work Force Argeş in the year 2012

Year 2012	Total Number of Persons	Rate of Unemployment %
January	14,616	5.61
February	14,563	5.59
March	13,891	5.33
April	12,795	4.91
May	12,460	4.78
June	12,311	4.72
July	12,985	4.98
August	13,730	5.27
September	13,519	5.19
October	14,126	5.51

(Source: www.arges.anofm.ro/statistica.html)

In April 2012, 1,105 newly created vacant positions were made available to the applicants, of which 744 positions (67,3%) for workers.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The paper had as a purpose the presentation of the recruitment activity from a theoretical and a practical point of view. The importance of the paper is given by the correct identification of the main recruitment practices and criteria used by this multinational company. Thus, the Valeo Group prefers young people, with a development potential, capable of learning foreign languages and willing to relocate. The employees of Valeo have to have the capacity of working in a team, with people belonging to various cultures and have to prove their ability to anticipate. The Valeo Group has four key-rules for recruitment: *confidentiality of the candidacies, systematic response, mutual commitment to transparency, respect for other persons and lack of discrimination.*

Under these circumstances, **we suggest:**

1. **Direct recruitment.** The transmission of the information regarding the vacant positions for the directly productive staff in the villages that are close to the places where the company opened its factory because the expectations of those who live in a town are higher than those of the people who live in villages and, implicitly, their motivation is higher;

2. **Advertising the vacant jobs in the local newspapers;**

3. **Advertising the vacant jobs with The County Agency for the Occupancy of the Work Force**, because that is the place where all applications of the people who need a job are collected;

4. **Participating in the job fairs** advertised at the county, national and international level, in order to form a database with potential candidates for the future jobs available;

5. **Distributing information among the employees regarding the newly created jobs**, granting bonuses for the employees that recommend candidates that are subsequently recruited in the company.

In the future, the research can be extended to include the entire branch, by identifying the common recruitment practices and criteria of the suppliers of the automotive industry in Romania.

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