

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

TALENT MANAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

Nadine Khalil Ghalayini for Master's of Human Resources Management
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In this day and age, the importance of managing talent within an organization is fundamental to not only the success of the organization but to creating and maintaining a competitive advantage in any industry. Most of the research currently available has been derived from information gathered from the private sector and mainly the Global North. As such, the aim of this study is to critically evaluate the role and benefits of talent management in supporting international organization effectiveness. Moreover, the research gathered will help identify initiatives to improve the effectiveness of employees working, and work processes in international organizations, specifically at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. In order to accomplish this objective, semi-structured interviews along with an assessment of UNDP organization policy documents were used to collect the necessary information needed for analysis.

The results of the study revealed that proper talent management has strong implications on employees levels of engagement and retention, and on an organizations ability build a competitive advantage via human capital. All these factors paired together work towards improving both the effectiveness of employees along with the work processes in organizations.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Talent management (TM) has been described as “the systematic attraction, identification, development, engaging/retention, and deployment of those individuals with high potential who are of particular value to an organization” (Beheshtifar, Nasab, and Moghadam, 2012). Organizations should recognize that the strongest resources they can possibly obtain are their employees because “the future competitiveness and prosperity of an organization depend on its employees” (Nilsson, Ellström, 2012). Moreover, managing talent can have positive results on an organizations bottom line as well as create a significant competitive advantage over other organizations (Coulson Thomas, 2012, Gakovix and Yardley, 2007). Since talent management activities can be very timely and costly, it is essential for organizations to pin point whether the activities they are applying are contributing to employee effectiveness or not (Kim and Mclean, 2012; Chambers et al, 1997). Additionally, it is critical to uncover what weaknesses lie in the talent management policies and procedures, as the information can be used to improve and adjust talent management activities to better capitalize on investments (Tinsley et al, 2007, Chambers et al, 1998).

With that being said, the purpose of this research is to critically review talent management in the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon, with the aim of enhancing organization development and effectiveness. In order to achieve this aim, it is essential to begin by exploring the essence of talent management. This will be accomplished by exploring the history of talent management and by examining what is considered as being talent management in our present day of age. As such, the different components that comprise talent management will be examined. This consists of workforce

planning, onboarding, performance management, training and development, succession planning, compensation and benefits, and critical skills gap analysis (Schuler et al, 2012; CIPD).

Up until this point, most of what will have been described will have been a result of research that has been done in the private sector and mainly the Global North. As such, it was imperative to explore what has been occurring with organizations operating on an international scale, especially since research in this domain is lacking. As a result and in order to receive a full rounded view of talent management, the main challenges associated with global talent management were explored, which consist of ethnocentrism, relocation of talented employees', and distance between the parent company and subsidiaries (Kim, Mclean, 2012). In addition, the manners in which an organization can cope with these challenges will be discussed and include allowing room to exercise both centralized and decentralized strategies, focusing on long-term goals instead of short-term goals, incorporating global competencies, using global teams, and engaging managers and employees to take the lead (Kim, Mclean, 2012). Lastly, a popular tool known as the nine-box talent management grid will be discussed in order to review TM in the UNDP as it is a concise method that can be used on a global scale to assess talents and potential talents within an organization, and its global focus is especially relevant to the UN. The understanding of talent management best practices and consideration for what is occurring within organizations operating in an international playing field will lead to the main topic of concern, talent management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. In light of the above, the purpose of this study is to critically evaluate the role and benefits of talent management in supporting

international organization effectiveness. Additionally, the research gathered will help in the enhancement of talent management policies and procedures at the UNDP.

In order to assess talent management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon, it is important to first explore the talent management process. As such, the following section, will outline the stages of the talent management process and explain how it is managed in organizations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Processes and Stages of Talent Management: A Review

Talent has been described as “individuals who can make a difference to organization performance either through their immediate contribution or, in the long-term, by demonstrating the highest levels of potential” (Metcalf, 2017). Organizations who value, manage and view their talented employees as being their greatest assets are securing their engagement and commitment in a highly competitive local and global market. However, nurturing talent and fostering talent is a complex process. The McKinsey Quarterly first introduced the notion of managing talent in their magazine publication in the late 90s. Following this several partners at McKinsey wrote a text the “The War for Talent” in 2000, which drew on experiences with developing talent in leading blue chip organizations. . According to the original orientation the “War for Talent” treatise focused on talent management initiatives and target the ‘elite’ group of individuals within an organization, who were in key decision making roles. The focus of their research purely took place in the United States and revolved exclusively around top ranks of companies and executives in which they “[compared] the responses to survey questions of groupings of high-, average-, and low-performing executives”. As such, the recommendations made by McKinsey stress an executive talent pool and are not applicable to employees who are not at the top levels of the organization. The “War for Talent” publication gave rise to some controversy and substantive criticism for following a purely ‘exclusive’ rather than ‘inclusive’ approach to talent management. The exclusive approach to managing talent focuses solely on a small group of individuals that the organization deems as being their top performers. On the other

hand, the inclusive approach to talent management recognizes that high performing employees should be nurtured at every level of the organization. An inclusive approach also highlights that TM processes can be developed at different scales. The debate about inclusive and exclusive has been a key point of contention globally. Some organizations have now stated that TM is focusing on 'elite workers', and this is legitimated given the competitive global economy. Nevertheless, it has raised questions about the ethics of TM, and overall concerns about employee well-being (Capelli, 2007, Swailes, 2013).

In response to the "War for Talent", a review was done by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in 2016 questioning whether talent management initiatives should be exclusively focused on an elite group of people or whether they should be inclusive and include "the workforce who are either at the tip or who are identifies as having the potential to get to the top by demonstrating high levels of potential or performance" (Tansley et al., 2006). The inclusive approach to talent management takes into account that there are positions that need to be filled within the organization at all levels and not only at senior level positions because it is necessary that a "future pipeline of the 'appropriate' skills to fill all of these positions, whatever the level" (Tansley et al., 2006). As such, it is crucial that organizations pay attention to their talents at all level levels of the organization whether they are executive level positions or not.

In this day in age, talent management is crucial to the success of any organization whereby the organization must "[identify], [recruit], [manage] and [retain] high performers or talented individuals to meet the present and future demands of an organization" (Nilsson, Ellström, 2012). It is not sufficient for organizations to simply

have a vast number of employees. In order to distinguish themselves from the market, organizations must be able to develop the talents of their employees as “talent continues to be viewed as a strategic differentiator” (Ashton, Morton, 2005). Success in talent management involves the participation of managers at every level of the organization as “the work of talent management cuts across what has been traditional HR silos” (Ashton, Morton, 2005). Managers must be able to recognize that their employees are assets and that they are in charge of guiding those employees to reach their full potential, which in turn will be in the best interest of the organization. In addition to the support of management, it is essential that HR professionals have a clear understanding of how “they define talent, who they regards as ‘the talented’ and what their typical background might be” (Tansley et al., 2006, CIPD, 2016). The backing of management and knowledgeable HR professionals sets in place a strong foundation for talent management initiatives and increases the likelihood of success in managing the talents of the organization.

In order to manage talent efficiently and effectively, one must look into the different activities and initiatives that occur within an organization to ensure that talented employees are both recruited and retained. As such, the below section will examine areas revolving around workforce planning, onboarding, performance management, training and development, succession planning, compensation and benefits, and critical skills gap analysis.

2.1.1 Workforce Planning

The talent management process begins long before the employee is even recruited to the organization. Employees should not be recruited until the needs and

goals of the organization are identified. We can also look at this statement on a smaller scale and say that individual departments should not hire employees until they identify what is needed in order to achieve their goals, which should match the goals of the organization as a whole. Only once that is done, can they move onto “the utilization of individuals to achieve organizational objectives” (Mondy, 2010). A good place to start while discussing workforce planning is job analysis, which has been defined as “the systematic process of determining the skills, duties and knowledge required for performing jobs in an organization” (Mondy, 2010, Schuler et al, 2012). In order to select the right employees it is crucial to determine the duties and responsibilities, the competencies, and the minimum requirements, such as education and relevant years of experience needed to perform the job efficiently and effectively. Job analysis should be coupled with forecasting in order to identify “the number, skill, and location of employees the organization will need at future dates in order to meet its goals” (Mondy, 2010) (Zheltoukhova, K., Baczor, 2012, Schuler et al, 2012). If the forecasting process determines that the organization has sufficient employees, with the right skills and abilities to reach its goals, it might not need to undergo recruitment. Job analysis combined with forecasting serve as clear indicators to determine which candidate is best fit for the job.

2.1.2 Onboarding

Setting in place a proper orientation program for newly hired recruits has many benefits. A proper orientation program should introduce the applicants to the entire organization and should inform them of the mission, vision, and values of the organization. If done correctly, the onboarding process should give the employee a clear

indication of the organization they are working for and their place within the organization. Discussing the values and culture of the organization can help employees adopt the values as their own, which has shown to have a positive effect on loyalty and commitment because it “leads to internalization of loyalty to the place of work and commitment to act in a manner that fits the organization’s goals and interests” (Ekwutosi. Moses, 2013). Moreover, the orientation process also plays a key role in proving the new recruits with necessary information regarding organization policies, procedures, and even their benefits and entitlements. Lastly, proper onboarding helps in ensuring that the employees receive a clear understanding of what is expected from them at work. Ensuring that the employee has a clear understanding of their role in the organization will provide them with the solid platform needed to catapult themselves into the organization.

2.1.3 Performance Management

Performance management is an essential and continuous process that should take place during an employee’s entire span of employment with the organization. Evaluations usually take place annually and when done correctly, serve as a guide for informing employees whether they should keep on doing what they have been doing or whether a behavior is in need of change. There are several forms of evaluation systems available to organizations, such as online applications or written forms. Employees should be permitted and encouraged to go through a self-evaluation process in which they attempt to objectively rate their own performance. Once the self-evaluation is complete, a meeting should be scheduled between the supervisor and the employee to discuss the results of the evaluation, whether they are positive or negative. If the results

lean towards the negative side, it is necessary that feedback be given to the employee to discuss the behaviors that need to be improved or changed in order to better accomplish the requirements of the job. The meeting should also help alleviate any disagreements, frustrations, or ambiguities that took place during the evaluation process. Employees should be informed that evaluations are not put in place to create tension, but are there to help them improve their effectiveness for their personal benefit and for the benefit of the organization. It is also important to schedule a meeting when the results of the evaluation are positive in order to give the employee recognition for a job well done. Proper recognition has many benefits, which Wills, Labelle, Gué rin, and Tremblay (1998) claim is “one of the most important sources of organizational mobilization and engagement” (Brun, Dugas, 2008). Lastly, managers and employees need to constantly have conversations and make sure that constructive feedback is being passed back and forth on a regular basis. It is very important for management to ensure that no conversation is surpassed especially when it comes to dealing with a difficult conversation.

2.1.4 Training and Development

Training and developing employees is one of the key elements of talent management and has also shown to create higher levels of retention within organization. As such, organizations should recognize that employees are fundamental assets to the organization and it is crucial to retain key staff. From a purely corporate outlook, investments should be made towards employees in order to capitalize on their abilities. With that being said, employee development does not only benefit the firm as it could also have a tremendous impact on “employee satisfaction, improved morale, higher

retention, lower turnover, improved hiring, a better bottom line, and the fact that satisfied employees produce satisfied customers” (Mondy, 2010). When employees recognize that their organizations are recognizing their efforts and are willing to invest in them (Zheloukhova, K., Baczor, 2012), it creates a sense of commitment and loyalty to the organization and ultimately results in retention of employees. To begin the training process, employers should conduct a needs analysis in order to assess where the employee training needs lie. Moreover, training and development does not only revolve around developing employee needs to satisfy the current needs of the organization, but also to ensure that organizations have the right employee on hand to deal with future needs that may arise. To take the training and development initiative a step further, organizations could consider looking into the areas that the employees would like to develop themselves in even if those areas are not currently needed in the organization. This could lead to increased employee satisfaction and the organization will ultimately benefit from any employee who is developing their skills and competencies. Organizations should recognize that the benefits of training and development are full circle and if applied correctly can play a key role in retaining high fliers and key employees.

2.1.5 Succession Planning

Succession planning is a process by which employees within the organization with high levels of potential are recognized and developed in order to fill future vacancies. The positive outcomes of succession planning are endless to both the organization and to the employees as it enables organizations to save on costly and timely recruitments. It also enables organizations to retain their talented employees and

to transform them into leaders. Employees tend to have a higher level of engagement once they recognize that there is a possibility for growth within their organization, which in turn produces higher returns for the organization because “business results improve as leaders become more engaged by their jobs and the opportunities” (Berger, Berger, 2004, Zheltoukhova, K., Baczor, 2012).

Additionally, identifying key positions is very important as they “underscore and dramatize important work processes that must be carried out and results must be continuously accomplished” (Rothwell, 2010). With that being said, these positions must not be left vacant at any time as it can turn out to be detrimental to the success of the organizations long term strategic goals. One of the best ways to fill these positions is through succession planning, as hiring internally reduces the learning curve associated with hiring incumbents external to the organization. Also, internal applicants are already familiar with the organizations policies, procedures, and culture, which can prove to be a value added as they can easily integrate into the new position with minimal resistance.

2.1.6 Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and benefits are put in place to reward employees for achieving and contributing to the goals of the organization. Compensation and benefits can be monetary such as salaries, insurance, and bonuses or nonfinancial, such as recognition for a job well done, flexible working hours, and a positive working environment. The objective behind having in place a proper structure for compensation and benefits is to ensure that organizations are able to retain and motivate their talented employees. Factors that increase employee motivation differ from individual to individual and as such there is no set in stone framework for compensation that all organizations must

abide by, so it is important that “companies [do] not make the assumption that all employees are motivated by the same things; compensation and incentives should be set on an individual basis” (Berger, Berger, 2004). Although challenging, organizations should make a proper investment towards discovering what incentives are suitable to satisfy the needs and wants of their employees.

2.1.7 Critical Skill Gap Analysis

The last phase of the talent management cycle refers to critical skill gap analysis, which revolves around identifying the current skills of the employees and pinpointing whether those skills are sufficient to complete the tasks within their job descriptions. The process is essential as it allows organizations to identify employee skills that require development. As previously mentioned, developing the skills of the existing staff have a significant effect on employee satisfaction and retention (Mondy, 2010 Zheltoukhova, K., Baczor, 2012).

The forgoing discussion highlights the key elements of TM systems. However, the research that exists is based on the Global North, and principally North American MNCs (Swailles, 2013). There is little research that focuses on the Global South countries and organizations headquartered in the South, and even less that focuses on international organizations such as the UN. This is important as agencies like the UN and World Bank have a different role to play in the global political economy. They also have a different role depending on if their work is informing economic and social policy, in developed or developing regions (Brun and Dougas. 2007, Saadat, V., & Eskandari, 2012, Schuler et al, 2012). While it is important to appreciate contemporary research on TM, research that is linked to the Global North and the private sector may

not always be appropriate, and so it will be important to link knowledge gleaned to the overall development objectives of the UN regional headquarters. A key aspect that is likely to be different is the exclusive or inclusive philosophy. After debates of who are talented in the global economy, many private sector firms have argued a specific stance. McKinsey have supported their original view and highlighted that key staff in decision-making positions are really important and also create groups of talented workers (for example delinking IT and operations) (Schuler et al, 2012). Others, CIPD argue premise their TM philosophy with an inclusive approach, as this is cornerstone to HRM strategy (CIPD, 2016).

The theorizing of talent management has principally been shaped by the private sector, multinational companies, and the global north whereby “most studies on global TM are focused on corporations, not other types of organizations, such as non-governmental organizations” (Kim, Mclean, 2012). As such, there has been a major gap in the literature with regards to the international non-profit organizations that play a key role in economic and social development. In the next chapter I explore the current information available with regards to talent management in international organizations who operate on a global scale. In doing so, I will be discussing the challenges associated with global talent management, how to manage those challenges, and a popular tool that can be used on a global scale to assess talents within an organization.

2.2 Talent Management in International Organizations

When discussing global talent management and talent management in international organizations, it is important to consider that talent should be managed to reach the ultimate strategy of the organization and should be consistent on a global level

in order to ensure success. As such, global talent management is defined as being “an organization’s efforts to acquire, develop, and retain talent to meet organizational strategies on a global scale, given not only the difference between organizations but also their global and cultural contexts” (Kim, Mclean, 2012). Since international organizations operate on a global scale, there are certain issues that must be taken into consideration such as cultural differences, language barriers, and varying environments. As a result, it is essential that HR personnel recognize that approaches to talent management on a global scale should differ from approaches used by organizations that operate domestically. Additionally, it is important for international organizations to manage talents in order to not only create a competitive advantage but to ensure that the advantage is both maintained and continuously growing. In order to apply an international talent management philosophy, it is first and foremost crucial that the organization come up with or highlight their own definition of the term talent. Establishing the definition of what is meant by talent will direct decision makers and managers towards the employees who have potential or who bring a unique value added to the organization.

2.2.1 Challenges Associated with Global TM and How to Overcome Them

According to Kim and Mclean, there are three main challenges that organizations face when developing their talents on a global scale. The first challenge revolves around ethnocentrism, which is the notion that “one's own group, ethnicity, or nationality is superior to others” (Ethnocentrism and APA," n.d.). The issue an ethnocentric approach is that it has a tendency to create ignorance amongst people in that they are no longer open to different suggestions or practices, which may in fact be

better than their existing strategies. With that being said, it is not recommended that organizations completely standardize and centralized their talent management process as they should always take into consideration cultural differences that exist from country to country. Moreover, a significant challenge that goes hand in hand with managing talent on a global scale revolves around concerns about having talented employees relocated to areas away from the parent company. The main concern behind relocating talent is that they may be transferred to a country that they are unable to adjust too, which may ultimately demotivate them and indirectly set them up for failure. Lastly, there are challenges associated with there being distance and restrictions between the parent company and subsidiaries whereby the subsidiaries may end up losing track of the big picture as “managers may recruit, asses, and develop talent with a standard according to their own strategies and competencies rather than that of the headquarters” (Mellahi & Collings, 2010). This would result in the subsidiary simply working towards improving their performance instead of focusing on the strategy and goal of the organization as a whole. This lack of coordination and synergy could derail the organizations global talent management strategy and could result in the loss of talented employees, especially if they are placed in a situation that has them pinned between headquarters and the subsidiary.

To deal with the challenges involved with managing talent on a global scale, organizations should first and foremost allow room for both centralized and decentralized strategies to exist. Ensuring the existence of decentralized strategies allows for flexibility when presented with issues related to cultural diversity, which exist in subsidiaries operating away from the host country. In order to make sure that the strategies are both aligned with each other, the organization may find it beneficial to

send HR personnel from their headquarters to “help incorporate and utilize global TM systems at the subsidiaries, taking into account the local context” (Mellahi & Collings, 2010). This will certify that information regarding the strategy is delivered clearly and appropriately whilst taking into consideration cultural differences. With that being said, it is important to highlight that organizations who are successfully operating on a global scale are doing so partly because they have been able align their talent management policies and procedures with the strategic plans and business needs of the organization. As such and as previously mentioned, the decentralized strategy must remain in line with the strategic plans and business needs of the organization, especially since many of the subsidiaries are often operating away from the Head Quarters or parent company. Moreover, aligning talent management activities with the strategic plans and business needs of the organization can help organizations to form a strategic advantage. As such, leaders of organizations need to remain focused on the long-term goals and objectives of the organization in order to ensure that the talent management activities are strategically aligned. For instance, if the strategic plan of the organization revolves around being innovative leaders in the market place, then the organization needs to ensure that their talent management strategy is directed towards fostering a culture of creativity and innovation. Additionally, training and development initiatives should be directed towards developing employees’ skills and abilities with regards to the use of new and up- to-date technologies. Also, the organization would opt to encourage a culture to allows mistakes and risk taking, which should go hand in hand with a culture that fosters both creativity and innovation. On the other hand, if the strategic plan and company strategy are focused on growth and include a potential merger with another organization, then the talent management activities should promote and educate staff on

issues related to change management and cultural diversity. Furthermore, if the company is primarily concerned with being results oriented, then the organization should focus on developing their talents to keep up with the performance driven culture. In this case, employees could receive trainings in results-based management whereas leaders could be trained on how to get the best out of their employees and on how to capitalize on their employees' strengths in order to generate results for the organization. With that being said, it is crucial to leave room for flexibility with regards to tying the talent management strategy with the organizations business needs because the organization must continuously keep up with ever changing conditions and business needs.

Accordingly, both international and local companies who thrive for success should acknowledge that talent management activities should be put in place to satisfy the long-term goals of the organization. In order to do so, talent management activities should be targeted towards "high performers or talented individuals to meet the present and future demands of an organization" (Nilsson, Ellström, 2012). Moreover, a solid framework should be put in place in order to guarantee that organizations have the right staff on hand with the right capabilities when needed. As previously mentioned, talent management initiatives should be directed towards all employees whether they are in leadership, mid-level or lower level positions, which will in turn ensure that all employees within the organization have the right skills and abilities needed to either generate innovative ideas, solutions, and results. Moreover, the goals and strategic objectives of the organization should be communicated to employees at all times in order to ensure that they are aware about the goals and strategic direction of the firm.

This will in turn create employee awareness and will allow employees to dedicate their knowledge and skills towards achieving the strategic goals of the organization.

Additionally, the organization could take into consideration incorporating global competencies that will help employees who are working in a global environment. Globally competent employees have the ability to “examine local, global and intercultural issues, understand and appreciate different perspectives and world views, interact successfully and respectfully with others, and take responsible action toward sustainability and collective well-being” (Ramos, Schleicher, 2018). This will in turn facilitate the employees’ ability to both operate and integrate into any situation they are faced with.

Moreover, the organization should consider the use of global teams, which have been defined as a “group of employees from different cultures or countries who work together to do a particular job” (McLean, 2006). These global teams do not necessarily have to be working together face to face but could be operating on a virtual level from various countries. The advantages of having a global team is that the team will be comprised of individuals from different cultural backgrounds that will help to reduce any preconceptions, which may occur when working in a multicultural environment. Additionally, the use of global teams allows the different members from different subsidiaries to truly shine and share their knowledge with other branches and even with headquarters. This could be seen as an opportunity for the organization to identify and benefit from the talents they have scattered around the world. Finally, the benefits of having a culturally diverse team are immense as differing points of views often stimulate both innovative and create solutions to problems that may have not been thought of before.

Lastly, employees as well as managers should play a very important role when discussing talent management in both local and international organizations. Employees should step up and take the lead with regards to their own development and “play an active part themselves by seeking out challenging assignments, cross-functional projects and new positions” (Stahl et.al 2012). This way, employees will be taking control of their own training and development in order to enhance their skills and abilities as well as take their performance to the next level. Also, management should be actively involved in the talent management process, especially when talents are being assessed in an organization. In the end, direct managers are the ones working with employees on a daily basis and as such can highlight the employees they believe are the most talented or who have demonstrated the highest levels of potential. Since managers are familiar with their employees’ levels of performance and potential, they can use their knowledge to identify existing along with potentials talents. An easy and popular tool that can be used to do exactly that is known as the 9-box talent management grid and will be described in the section below.

2.2.2 The Nine-Box Talent Management Grid

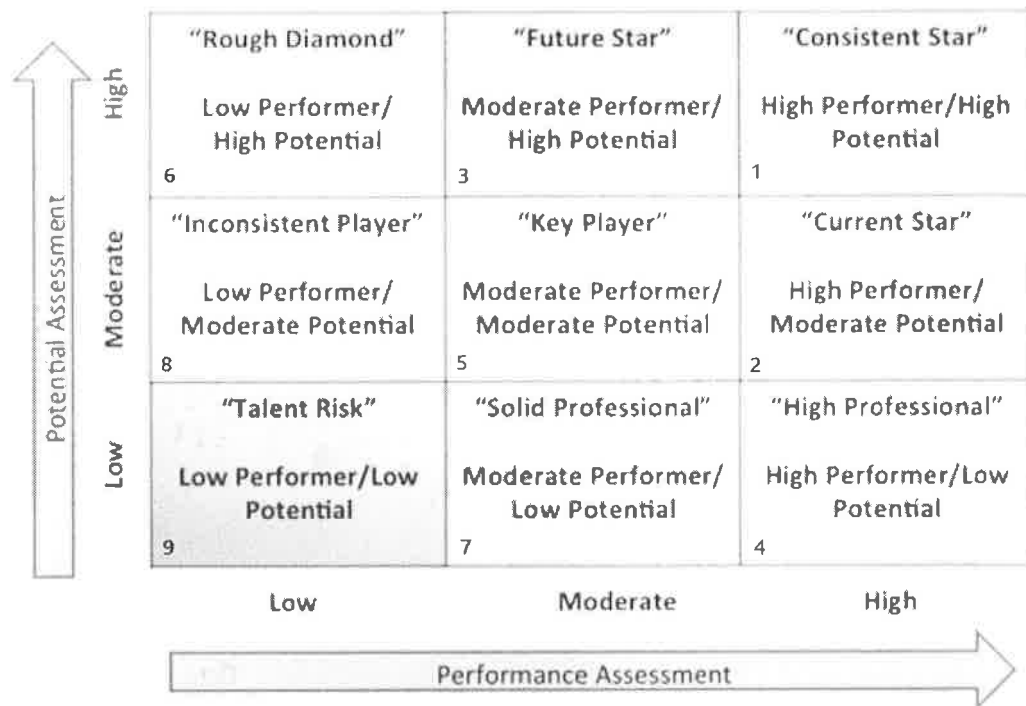


Figure 2.1 Identifying and Removing Blockers Using the 9 Box Grid. (Caruso, 2014)

One of the most popular tools used globally to assess talents within the organization goes by many names but is most commonly known as the nine-box talent management (TM) grid. The nine-box TM grid was created by McKinsey and is used to assess different business units and to identify new talents and to re-evaluate existing once across the board (Morrison, 2010). The axes of the grid measure an employee's respective potential (y-axis) versus their actual performance (x-axis).

As per the figure provided above, employees who are located in quadrant six of the grid area described as "Rough Diamonds" and have a high level of potential and a low level of performance. In this case, the employees low level on the performance radar is not necessarily directly attributed to their actual performance but could be due to the fact that they have recently joined the organization and no actual evaluation exists

to properly measure their performance. For instance, if the performance appraisal takes place periodically, the newly recruited employee or rough diamond would have not had the chance to be evaluated properly given that he or she would have been in the organization for only a short period of time. Moreover, there is a learning curve involved when hiring a new incumbent to the organization, which means that an accurate assessment of their performance is simply not possible or fair. Also, employees in the rough diamond category could be existing employees who have transferred to another business unit or department, in which the same conditions mentioned with relation to performance would be applied. As such, rough diamonds should be developed within their existing positions and are not viable and for the time being should not be considered as potential successors.

Furthermore, quadrant eight of the grid is located in the middle spectrum of potential, low on the scale of performance and are defined as "Inconsistent Players". These employees have most likely been with the company for a considerable amount of time and have yet to prove themselves in the organization. Since their level of potential is not fully depleted, they could be given another chance to improve their performance until being asked to exit the organization.

Additionally, quadrant nine of the grid contains employees that have a low level of potential as well as a low level of performance and are referred to as "Talent Risk". These employees are not performing well on their jobs and do not have the potential to succeed in their positions. In this case, managers should strongly consider getting rid of these employees before their performance starts to have a negative effect on the rest of the team.

Quadrant seven contains employees who are labeled as being “Solid Professionals” who on the scale have a good level of performance but a low level of potential. From a performance point of view, these employees are fully performing and are meeting the requirements of the job. From a potential perspective, they have plateaued either due to their capabilities or due to the fact that they are resistant to change. When faced with solid professionals, organizations may attempt to further develop their skills in the hopes that they become enlightened and somewhat more innovative. Moreover, organizations could consider moving these employees laterally to a similar position that requires that same level of skill. If the organization uses a talent management approach that is exclusive, not directed towards all employees of the organization, over an inclusive approach, talent management directed towards the entire organization, then they would not invest their time and money in trying to develop solid professionals.

"High Professionals" lie in quadrant four of the nine-box talent grid and are considered to have a high level of performance and a low level of potential. These employees have been in the organization for a long period of time and can actually be considered as being mentors to other employees. As such, organizations should focus on retaining these masters and technical experts. Moreover and most importantly, these mentors can be used to further develop and educate other employees within the organizations.

Quadrants five, “Key Players”, and two, “Current Stars”, are employees that should be considered for a promotion in the near future. They have still not reached their full potentials, but organizations should invest in developing their talents in order to facilitate and encourage them to reach their full potentials. Additionally, employees

located in these quadrants can and should soon be considered for succession planning initiatives.

Lastly, organizations should strongly invest in managing their talents located in quadrants three, “Future Stars”, and one, “Consistent Stars”. Future stars are those who score very high in terms of potential but have not reached a level in which they are attaining the highest level of success in terms of performance. In order to take their performance to the next level, organizations should invest in these employees by providing them with the tools and skills needed to enhance their performance.

Additionally, giving these employees stretch assignments, which are assignments that are assignment that are deemed as being higher than their actual levels can help in strengthening their skills and abilities. These stretch assignments will both challenge employees and aid in evaluating whether they are viable for promotion and succession planning related activities. Lastly, the employees labeled as consistent stars have both a high level of potential and a high level of performance. As such, organizations should make an effort to retain their stars especially if they are occupying positions that are considered to be critical to the company.

In the next section, the UNDP will be briefly introduced by focusing on areas such as the history of the organization, vision and mission, values, people centered approach, and a brief on the Country Office in Lebanon.

2.3 The United Nations Development Programme

The best way in which to describe the UNDP is by looking at an excerpt that has been taken from the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 published in April 2013, which states that the UNDP is “neither a development bank nor a charity, nor is it a specialized agency or a non-governmental organization. We are an institution that believes in growth that creates wealth and opportunities for the many and not the few, development that benefits those living today as well as future generations and societies that provide citizens with the means and space to contribute meaningfully to development” (“UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017,” 2013). As such, the UNDP focuses on strengthening the capacities of countries in which it operates in by eradicating poverty, promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and protecting natural resources to name a few. The UNDP is currently working in approximately 170 different countries and has been operating in Lebanon since the 1960’s. Currently, the UNDP is continuing its work to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Global Goals, as they help shape global sustainable development for the next 15 years. The sustainable development goals consist of promoting no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clear water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice, and strong institutions and partnerships for the goals.

2.3.1 Mission and Vision

With that being said, the mission statement of the UNDP is to “achieve the eradication of poverty, and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion [by helping] countries to develop policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities and build resilience in order to sustain development results” (“Our Work,” 2017). Additionally, the vision of the UNDP is to “help countries to achieve the simultaneous eradication of extreme poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion using a sustainable human development approach” (“UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017,” 2013). This means that the UNDP will assist countries in not only strengthening their policies but also in providing them with the tools necessary to develop their capacities in order to remain sustainable on their own. They aim to achieve this goal by providing continuous feedback on innovations to benefit all stakeholders involved in all areas of their work.

2.3.2 Values

The main values that the UNDP abides by include “a set of six corporate values that defines behavior expected of all UNDP personnel, regardless of function or level. The purpose of applying these values is to create a code of behavior that builds a unified culture and supports the vision and mission of UNDP” (“YOUNDP In Brief,” n.d.). The values consist of ethics, accountability, and responsibility as a global civil servant, accountability, integrity, transparency, mutual respect, professionalism, and results orientation. With that being said, employees at the UNDP are both accountable and responsible for their work and to ensure that they complete their assigned tasks and other duties required by their jobs. Additionally, integrity is one of the fundamental

values that must be possessed by all incumbents working at the UNDP whereby employees' must be honest and have strong moral principles. Moreover, transparency exists at all levels of the organization, which reinforces mutual respect between both supervisors and supervisees. Furthermore, professionalism in the workplace is an essential quality among UNDP employees', which ensure that the goals and objectives of the organization are being attained in a manner that is acceptable and efficient manner. Lastly, a result orientated culture ensures that all employees are operating at optimal levels of efficiency while maintaining the best interest of the organization and the people whom the organization serves at heart.

2.3.3 A People Centered Approach

The business strategy of the HR department is a people-centered strategy that follows the notion that "human resources (HR) is about people and people are the core asset of the UNDP" ("Human Resources in UNDP A People-Centered Strategy 2008-2011," 2000). In parallel with the UNDP's goals to achieve sustainable human development, the HR strategy revolves around placing the employees' aspirations, responsibilities, values, and capabilities at the center of what they do. In order to ensure that the strategy is working successfully, the UNDP has made it a point to ensure that their people-centered strategy actually caters to their employees and to the different needs of Country Offices all around the world. Additionally, the Strategy for Managing Human Resources envisions a UNDP that is more effective, responsive, and productive because it invests in its staff and draws on shared values and principles. The strategy thus affirms the UNDP Strategic Plan and sets out to develop organizational effectiveness in three areas, which consist of talent sourcing to attract and retain talented

people committed to the values of the organization, staff capacity in order to develop the capacity of staff members to reach their full potential, and an enabling environment to create a positive working environment that motivates staff.

2.3.4 The UNDP Country Office in Lebanon

The UNDP Country Office in Lebanon is currently comprised of 63 individuals, which makes up both the programme and operations staff. The programme employees are the individuals who are responsible for the four different portfolios at the Country Office in Lebanon, which include Energy and Environment, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Governance, and Social and Local Development. There are various projects under each portfolio and the project staff report directly into their respective programme. In simplest terms, the programme staff is there in order to create a centralized management process to ensure quality assurance and control for all the projects taking place in Lebanon. Additionally, the role of the operations team is to ensure that the proper support is available to all employees working under the spectrum of the UNDP. The different units that make up the operations team are the Human Resources unit, the IT unit, the Security unit, the Procurement unit, the Administration unit, the United Nations Volunteers field unit, and the Communications unit. Similar to all organizations, there is a hierarchy at the UNDP, which means that there are employees who are operating at the senior levels, middle levels, and junior levels of the organization irrespective of whether they are a part of the programme or the operations team.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

3.1 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to critically evaluate the role and benefits of talent management in supporting international organization effectiveness. The research gathered will help in the development and further enhancement of talent management policies and procedures.

3.2 Specific Research Question

How and in what ways can talent management initiatives improve the effectiveness of employees working, and work processes in international organizations, specifically at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon?

3.3 Methodology

The research is positioned with social constructions of organization knowledge (Musson in Cassell, 2007). This acknowledges that concepts are shifting in accordance to specific organization and historically defined moments. This approach appreciates that there is no a grand master narrative that shapes knowledge and meaning, rather we need to appreciate different identities and subjectivities and how they are constituted and reconstituted in a particular place and time. A social constructivist lens also acknowledges the role of the researcher and their potential impact on knowledge generating processes. I appreciate that I am part of the organization context, and will highlight this aspect when I am exploring the data (Musson, 2007). An important part of analyzing data will be how I reflect on this process and in the full project I will discuss

this in more detail. At this stage it is relevant to note that research reflexivity will comprise part of the results.

A qualitative research method will be employed in order to gather information on the talent management activities, which are targeting staff at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon and their perceived effectiveness. As such, semi-structured interviews along with an assessment of organization policy documents will be used to gather the necessary information needed for analysis. The use of semi-structured interviews has been selected in order to allow me to gain more nuanced and in-depth information from the employees, which would not be possible if using a questionnaire. The subjects that will be interviewed will be ten employees from the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon who are currently holding Service Contracts at levels' five and six, which are positions that are typically associated with incumbents at the "Assistant" level. Additionally, the employees at these levels represent the workforce at the middle level of the organization. Since the middle level employees make up for most of the staff working at the UNDP Country Office, it is of utmost interest to interview these employees and learn about the culture at the midlevel and to learn about what they are benefiting from in terms of talent management initiatives. Moreover, the midlevel employees were selected for this study as opposed to employees holding higher-level positions on the hierarchy, which will serve to really uncover the approach to talent management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon and to allow for a proper analysis of the policies and procedures associated with managing talent at the organization. Furthermore, the interviews with employees at the midlevel will reveal if talent management at the organization is inclusive, whereby it focuses on all employees within the organization, or exclusive, whereby only senior level employees are targeted

towards the initiatives. A sample of the interview questions may be found in the appendix for reference.

The interview questions will be targeted towards uncovering and exploring exactly what constitutes talent management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. Additionally, the life history approach to conducting interviews that was established by Gill Musson will be invoked, whereby the “method prioritizes individual explanations and interpretations of actions and events, viewing them as lenses through which to access the meaning that human beings attribute to their experience” (Cassell, Symon, 2004). As such, the interviews will not only reveal what constitutes talent and talent management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon, but also will shed light on the employees working role at the organization and how they reached the present stage of their careers.

The semi-structured interviews will be recorded and each participant will be given a pseudonym in order to ensure that none of the responses received can be traced back to them. Making sure that the interviews are conducted anonymously will make sure that the study is not harmful towards any of the participants and they will not be impacted in their professional and personal life. Prior to participating in the semi-structured interviews, an administrative staff, who will not coerce or unduly influence employees to participate in the interviews, will send an invitation letter to all potential participants by e-mail, which may be found in the appendix, that will explain the aim and objectives of the study. Lastly the e-mail will include an attached letter of consent that may be found in the appendix, which will provide the participants with a detailed explanation on the aim of the research, the benefits of the study, why they have been selected to participate in the study, how the data will be stored, how the participants

identities will be protected via the use of pseudonyms, the durations of the recorded interview that will be around 30 minutes, and that they have the right to discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Additionally, the letter of consent will serve to ensure that we have received the informed consent of all participants involved in the study. It is also noteworthy to mention at the beginning of the interviews, all participants will be reminded that the interviews are being undertaken on a voluntary basis and are not mandatory in anyway whatsoever. Furthermore, it will be made clear to the interviewees that they can withdraw from the study at any time.

Further to using semi-structured interviews, an assessment of organization policy documents will be conducted in order to reveal how the UNDP manages its talents. The analysis of organization documents will specifically focus on elements such as workforce planning, onboarding, performance management, training and development, succession planning, and compensation and benefits.

I would like to stress that semi-structured interviews have been selected as the primary means to gather information as they enable me to receive both rich and in-depth information. According to Brown (2002), interviews can help understand attitudes of respondents whereby they allow the interviewer to uncover the causes that have led the interviewees to respond to a particular question in a certain manner. Additionally, interviews usually generate a lot of feedback and give the interviewer the opportunity to probe if he or she deems that more information is needed. Lastly, semi-structured interviews will enable the researcher to identify reoccurring patterns and themes in the responses received, which will ultimately fulfill the purpose of the research study at hand.

3.4 Proposed Data Analysis

Since the proposed methodology for gathering the desired information revolves around semi-structured interviews, the qualitative data will be analyzed by using content analysis. Content analysis will be a useful tool in the study, as it will allow us to properly examine the textual and narrative data received from the semi-structured interview data. As previously mentioned and upon receiving consent from the participants, the interviews will be tape-recorded in order to make sure that no critical information is over looked or forgotten once the interviews are complete. Once the data is properly transcribed, it will be analyzed in detail whereby each response received for each questions will be examined in order to look for any differences, consistencies, or similarities. Content analysis highlights different themes and patterns in the data. The data will be coded and data given a signifying label that is anonymized. In order to organize data and explore themes, I will use 'textual analysis' to identify pertinent messages in the data (Tracey, 2010). Textual analysis is often used in projects, which are underscored by a social constructionist philosophy (see Musson, 2007 and Alvesson and 2018.) Furthermore, the information received will be dissected in order to identify specific themes, which could be done by assigning codes and specific codes to easily organize the data. In the analysis, examples from the semi-structured interviews will be provided anonymously when deemed as necessary to support my arguments and reasoning. For participants in my study I will send invitation letters to them requesting their co-operation and agreement (informed consent) highlighting that at all stages in the research process they can withdraw. I will highlight the robustness of this process by adhering to quality dimensions of qualitative research, which focus on inter alia relevance, and coherence as defined by Tracey, 2010.

The next section will revolve around critically analyzing the UNDP policy documents with regards to service contract holders at the UNDP. As such, I will be analyzing and commenting on the policies related to workforce planning, onboarding, performance management, training and development, succession planning and critical skills gap analysis.

CHAPTER 4

CONCEPTUALIZING TALENT MANAGEMENT AT THE UNDP

4.1 A Critical Analysis of UNDP Policy Documents

4.1.1 Workforce Planning

Workforce planning at the UNDP is a dynamic process that takes place regularly in order to respond to the frequently changing demands and needs of the organization. As such, it takes place during the planning of the project and each year during the overall planning and review of the project, which takes place regularly at the beginning of year and when starting to plan for the upcoming year. At the UNDP, the process begins with the programme staff evaluating what they have in terms of funding and budget. The two typical scenarios that emerge from determining that the availability of funds exist, is either the initiation of a new project or the expansion of an existing project. In order to plan for a new project and after confirming the availability of funds, the programme drafts what is needed in terms of manpower to get the job done both efficiently and effectively. For instance, the typical foundation for a project with the Energy and Environment Portfolio usually consists of four essential positions, which are the Project Manager, Project Engineer, Administrative and Finance Assistant, and Driver. Once the foundation of the project is set, the programme takes into consideration that all the contracts will need to be renewed on a yearly basis, which they include in their recruitment plan. If the project already exists, the programme evaluates the project periodically to ensure that all operations are working smoothly. If the project is growing and is in need of additional support because the already existing team is no longer able to properly manage the project, the programme will ensure that enough

funds exist and will then hire new people to support the project accordingly. Once all is said and done, each programme compiles the information gathered, such as job title, type of position, level, duration of employment, month position needs to be filled, and the source of funding for the position, and sends it to HR for consolidation. As such, the role of the HR team is to consolidate the recruitment plans, which results in a detailed list that contains expected recruitment plans that are to take place over the year.

Moreover, the HR team reviews the planned versus unplanned recruitments that have taken place over year, which reveals whether the programme staff has in fact properly planned for the year ahead or not. In turn, this information will be used to help the programme staff to properly plan for the year ahead. Lastly, workforce planning also provides critical information for the Head of HR whereby he or she now has a forecast of the expected workload and can in turn properly plan for how the work will be divided amongst the team.

With regards to workforce planning, it is evident that the UNDP is doing a meticulous job when forecasting and determining the workforce that will be needed in order to accomplish the job at an optimal level. Furthermore, there is a periodic review of the projects and workforce that takes place, which helps ensure that projects are moving smoothly or if any additionally support in terms of manpower is needed. Lastly, the consolidation of the recruitments plans done by the HR department helps the HR team in preparing their own work plan to cope with the forecasted demands made by the programme staff. As such, I believe that it is safe to say that the UNDP is doing an exemplary job when planning for their workforce related needs.

4.1.2 Onboarding

The orientation process at the UNDP is crucial in ensuring that newly hired employees have a smooth integration into the organization. Once the initial contracts have been signed, the employees meet with the UNDP Security Associate in order to receive a full security briefing on both the security status in the country and the UNDP security protocol that must be followed in case of emergency. Furthermore, the employees are invited to meet with the Head of HR to receive a full briefing on HR related issues, such as benefits and entitlements. During the initial meeting with the Head of HR, the employees will be given the SC orientation handbook, which has still not been officially launched but has been put together in order to ensure that the employees are properly integrated into the organization. It is important to note that although the SC orientation handbook has not been officially launched, the employees still receive all the documents and information needed to properly accustom themselves to the organization. The reasoning behind the orientation handbook is to compile all the information in one concise document instead of referring and searching through multiple documents to get the needed information. Moreover, the SC orientation handbook developed by the HR team at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon contains information that is directly targeted towards the employees working in Lebanon. As such, it does not contain any information that is not applicable to incumbents serving in the country.

The orientation handbook contains general information about the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon such as its mission, sustainable development goals, introduction to the country office programmes, and organizational structure. This background information ensures that new hires receive the basic information needed to

become properly acclimated to the organization. Additionally, employees can access an online platform known as YOUNDP that serves to guide the employees with regards to the information that should be sought, relationships that should be built, and knowledge that should be learnt and shared throughout the employees first week, first month, first 90 days, and even first year. With that being said, it is typically recommended that new hires meet with their supervisors in order to gain an in depth understanding of their supervisor's vision, to establish a plan of work, and to set target goals that will later be used as indicators to measure performance. Furthermore, the employee should take the time to thoroughly read through the UNDP Strategic Plan and annual reports to understand what the UNDP stands for, what it strives to achieve, and how it plans on doing so. Lastly, it is mandatory that all newly hired employees complete the mandatory courses that consist of Ethics and Integrity at UNDP, United Nations Course on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of the Local Population (PSEA), The Gender Journey: Thinking outside the box, UNDP Legal Framework: What every staff should know, UN Human Rights and Responsibilities, Basic Security in The Field II, and Advanced Security in the Field.

The next chapters of the orientation handbook are designed so that the newly recruited Service Contract holder has all the information he or she could possibly need with regards to the SC modality. As a result, policies related to the legal framework applicable to SC holders, the policy on contracting close relatives, and the overtime policy are explained in detail. Additionally, benefits such as health insurance, life and disability insurance, and pension benefits are described for the SC holders easy reference. Moreover, the various leave policies are described along with issues

revolving around performance management, contract extensions, and termination.

Finally, the orientation handbook briefly touches upon general policies related to gender, workplace harassment and abuse of authority, work-life balance, and ethics.

When analyzing the procedure that takes place at the UNDP with regards to onboarding employees, it is evident that the process is put in place to ensure that new recruits are properly acclimated to the organization. This conclusion has been reached mainly due to the meetings that are conducted with the new recruits such as the one held with the Head of HR, which serves to facilitate the employees understanding of what he or she is entitled to and to clear up any questions that the employees may have. Additionally, the orientation handbook that is under development will also contribute to providing the employees with a deeper understanding of the UNDP policies, procedures, entitlements, and benefits, along with much more. Since the orientation handbook has still not been officially launched, one may claim that there is a deficit in terms of what exists concerning procedures related to the onboarding of service contract holders, but it is once again important to keep in mind that the new recruits receive all necessary documents needed to access desired information. Also, it is important to highlight that the procedure for onboarding service contract holders does not blatantly state that employees must follow a standard process or checklist when joining the organization. Interestingly enough, the interviews conducted with mid-level employees at the Country Office in Lebanon revealed that certain practices are being followed when ensuring that employees know exactly what is expected from them at work. These practices will be discussed in section 5.2, which will focus on analyzing the findings of the semi-structured interviews.

4.1.3 Performance Management

The performance of Service Contract (SC) holders at the UNDP is monitored regularly through the use of evaluation forms. This is done in order to ensure that the SC is continuously receiving feedback to improve on his or her performance. Additionally, the evaluation is key when deciphering whether the employee has simply achieved the requirements of the job description or has gone beyond the call of duty. Moreover, the performance evaluation takes place annually prior to the expiry of an SC's contract as it has direct implications on whether the contract will be renewed or not and on whether the employee is entitled to a bonus or not.

The SC evaluation form is comprised of various sections. The first section requires that the SC holder fill in basic information related to their name, contract number, project title, position, duty station, organizational unit and reporting period. The second section is titled "Plan of Work" in which the employee is to insert the agreed plan of work, which was discussed with their supervisor prior to the commencement of their assignment. Moreover, the third section revolves around the employee's self-assessment whereby he or she is to insert a brief description of their accomplishments throughout the year. Once the above described sections are complete, the SC holder is to submit the evaluation form to their supervisor for their feedback. As such, step four of the evaluation form requires that the supervisor rate the employee on several attributes, such as teamwork skills, communication skills, technical skills..., on a five-point scale that rates the SC holder's traits as either "Excellent", "Very Good", "Satisfactory", "Requires Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory". Prior to moving onto the fifth step, the supervisor rates the employee's overall performance on the five-point scale. The fifth part of the evaluation is where the supervisor writes a brief description

of their overall assessment of the employee's performance throughout the reporting period. Upon completion of the supervisor's assessment, the employee is given the opportunity to review the assessment and write additional comments before signing the document along with their supervisor and respective Programme Manager.

As previously mentioned, the evaluation form dictates whether the employee is entitled to a bonus or not, as the bonus is not an automatic entitlement. With that being said, the bonus is a onetime payment that is granted upon the completion of a 12-month contract. If the employee's performance is above satisfactory, the employee will receive a bonus that is calculated as a percentage of 1 to 3% of the annual base remuneration. The decision regarding the percentage of the bonus is directly left up to the direct supervisor of the employee as he or she is considered to be the most familiar with their employees' performances.

When discussing the procedure put in place for managing the performance of service contract holders, one can say that the process is comprehensive and for the most part exemplary. Upon joining the UNDP, all employees are informed that the performance bonus is tied to the performance evaluation, which helps "employees and line managers to make the psychological link between performance and reward" (Bevan, 2000). The fact that the evaluations are tied to the bonus helps create an incentive for the employees to perform better on the job. Additionally, the performance management procedure put in place for service contract holders leaves room for both the supervisor and the employee to make their own assessments, which permits for two-way discussion that is hopefully both productive and constructive. The only change I would instate with regards to performance appraisals would be to have them take place semi annually instead of annually, which would ensure that employees are receiving

feedback on their performance on a timely basis. Although this would be time consuming for managers, I believe that it would be beneficial to provide the employees with more information regarding what he or she is doing right or wrong. Also, I am aware that many organizations, such as Deloitte, IBM and Microsoft, have abandoned performance appraisals altogether and have opted for a strategy that provides more real time information, but such a drastic change would require a lot of time, energy and training that the UNDP in Lebanon most probably does not have the time or funding to support such an initiative.

4.1.4 Training and Development

The UNDP has a very distinct view towards training and development as their vision of learning revolves around strengthening their “knowledge-based organization so it is consistently recognized for excellence as world-class in development advocacy and advisory services” (“JPO Service Centre,” n.d.). In order to live up to the expected vision of learning, the Head of HR in the Country Office bears a second title, Learning Manager. The Learning Manager at the UNDP country office is in charge of developing the Whole Country Office Learning Plan, which is amendment periodically based on the ever-changing needs of employees. As such, the learning and development plan represents a combination of organizational priorities and employees feedback on their interests in learning opportunities and priorities. In order to gather the needed information, the Learning Manager along with colleagues in the HR department review the learning and development needs survey results, the Lebanon Global Staff Survey (GSS) Results with regards to main challenges faced and conduct one-on-one meetings with employees. The learning and development needs survey is distributed to

employees on an annual basis and covers topics such as most preferred method of learning, opinions of ways to encourage learning in the office, employees belief on what their most urgent learning needs are, and in-house capacity, which refers to the existing staffs ability to provide a training to the rest of the office. Additionally, the GSS Survey is also conducted on a yearly basis and allows UNDP Lebanon the opportunity to view the challenges their employees face, among other issues, and compare them to other UNDP offices around the world. Furthermore, the Learning Manager has one on one meetings with the Country Office staff in order to discuss their long and short-term career aspirations and to identify assignments that would help staff to development necessary skills and competencies. Once the whole office learning plan is complete, the learning manager shares the report with the country director and the learning committee for approval. As previously mentioned, the whole office learning plan is updated as soon as new learning needs arise.

Additionally and upon joining the UNDP, every employee is granted access to the talent development center (TDC). The TDC is an online platform that given employees access to web-based courses and learning material related to programmes, competencies, human resources, finance, procurement, among a variety of other courses. As such, UNDP employees can pick from these courses in order to continuously develop their skills and abilities free of charge. Additionally, the TDC is where employees can complete the mandatory courses that have been described in the previous section titled Orientation Handbook. Moreover, there are courses and certifications available on the TDC that have been made available due to a need that has been recognized as a result of the global staff survey (GSS). For instance, the GSS recently highlighted that there is a need for enhanced people management skills and as a

result the TDC introduced the “UNDP People Management Certification Programme”, which is accredited by Harvard Business Publishing. ("JPO Service Centre," n.d.). Lastly, it is noteworthy to mention that according to the policy, employees at the UNDP are granted 5% learning time a week, which is equivalent to 2 hours per week. As such, the policy leaves room for employees to develop their skills and abilities.

In reference to training and development, the UNDP does have policies, procedures and tools put in place to support the learning and development of the service contract holders, whereby they have the TDC platform, the mandatory courses, and the 5% learning time. Additionally, the HR team plays a key role in leading the initiative by conducting a learning needs assessment analysis for all employees working at the Country Office, which is then compiled to create the whole office-learning plan. Lastly and most importantly, the office has a learning manager who is there to ensure that training and development initiatives are taking place.

4.1.5 Compensation and Benefits

Employees hired under a service contract at any level receive global coverage with an international insurance company at no cost. The SC will only be charged if he or she opts to include their family under the insurance plan. Furthermore, service contract holders are covered under the “Group Life and Disability Insurance”, which means that they are covered in case of disability, injury, and even death. Additionally, SCs receive a cash payment equivalent to 8.33% of their base remuneration to act as a form of pension plan. Lastly and as previously mentioned, SCs are granted a bonus based on performance, which ranges from 1-3%. In this case, the performance bonus is

considered to be a benefit as it is not an automatic entitlement and is only granted if the employees overall performance receives a rating equivalent to or above satisfactory.

When looking into what service contract holders receive in terms of compensation and benefit, it is fair to say that they receive a fair and justifiable amount compared to what is available in the Lebanese market. Compared to the market, it is typical for employees to receive health insurance domestically but service contract holders at the UNDP receive global coverage. Moreover, employees receive life insurance that could also be considered as an additional benefit related to the market.

4.1.6 Succession Planning and Critical Skills Gap Analysis

The policies and procedures on succession planning and critical skills gap analysis have not been described since I could not locate nor identify any policy directly targeted towards service contract holders. If in fact a policy for succession does not exist at the UNDP, they may consider using the nine-box talent management grid that has been previously described as a starting point to at least evaluate and assess the talents within their organization.

Now that the analysis on UNDP policy documents has been completed, the following section will be dedicated towards analyzing and commenting on the results of the interviews, which are crucial in order to truly understand what is happening on the ground at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon.

4.2 Critical Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews

| Demographic Information | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Age Range | 25-41 |
| Female | 6 |
| Male | 5 |
| Years of Service | 1-10 |

Table 4.2 Demographic Information

As per the above table, it is clear that many of the employees holding positions at the middle levels of the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon can be classified under generation Y, which consist of employees born between 1979 and 1991. According to the article, “Use Reward to Bridge the Generation Gaps and Keep your People” published by HayGroup, employees’ from generation Y seek career development and training in order to propel them to the next level of their careers. Additionally, generation Y enjoy rewards that are immediate and they have low levels of loyalty, which makes them more inclined to leave the organization as soon as they feel unsatisfied. In light of the above, management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon should pay a great deal of attention towards catering to the needs of their employees’ who are not necessarily loyal to the organization.

Additionally, the employees’ were asked about their career trajectory during the interviews, which revealed that many of the employees who are currently holding mid-level positions at the Country Office did not enter the organization to hold the positions they are currently occupying. For the most part, the employees started off as interns, transitioned to volunteers, and were then hired as service contract holders. This

is interesting as it allows us to make note of the growth and career development these employees have gone through before reaching their current status.

The figure provided below serves as a summary of the information that has been gathered from the interviews and broken down into themes, patterns, broad codes and specific codes in order to facilitate for further analysis.

| Theme | Broad Codes | Specific Codes |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Onboarding | 1.1 Orientation | 1.1.1 Job Description (ToRs) |
| | | 1.1.2 Guidance from supervisor |
| | | 1.1.3 Handover from a colleague |
| 2. Training and Development | 2.1 Learning time 5% | 2.1.1 Employee does not have time to make use of the 5% learning time |
| | 2.2 Trainings received | 2.2.1 Mandatory Courses |
| | | 2.2.2 Competency Based Trainings |
| | | 2.2.3 Technical Trainings |
| | 2.3 Additional trainings needed to attain career goals | 2.3.1 Competency/Soft skills |
| | | 2.3.2 Technical skills |
| | 2.4 Opportunities available to gain additional skills | 2.4.1 Talent Development Center |
| | | 2.4.2 Trainings provided by the office |
| | | 2.4.3 Support from supervisor |
| | | 2.4.4 Support from HR Department |
| 3. Career Plan | 3.1 Employees loyalty to the Organization (UNDP) | 3.1.1 Wants to stay with the UNDP but is willing to move based on what is available |
| 4. Performance Appraisal | 4.1 Uses & frequency of the performance appraisal | 4.1.1 To evaluate performance |
| | | 4.1.2 Continuous discussions take place |
| 5. Policy Awareness | 5.1 HRM & talent management strategy awareness | 5.1.1 Employee is not aware of the HRM & talent management strategy, but knows where to look in order to find it |
| | 5.2 Talent philosophy | 5.2.1 Employees are not aware of the talent philosophy, but knows where to look in order to find it |
| | 5.3 UN definition of talent | 5.3.1 Employees are not aware of the UN definition of talent |
| 6. Definition Talent | 6.1 Born talented or talent can be acquired over time | 6.1.1 People are born talented |
| | | 6.1.2 Talent can be acquired over time |
| | 5.2 Skills and abilities | 6.2.1 The notion of talent revolves around an employees' skills and abilities |
| | 5.3 Good performance | 6.3.1 The notion of talent revolves around an employees level of performance |
| 7. Talent Management | 7.1 Inclusive | 7.1.1 Talent Management initiatives include all employees at the UNDP |
| | 7.2 Exclusive | 7.2.1 Some employees are excluded from talent management initiatives due to contract modalities |

Table 4.2 Interview Findings

When exploring the onboarding and orientation process at the UNDP, the employees were asked if they have a clear understanding of what is expected from them at work. The answers received varied from utilizing the job description/terms of references, receiving guidance from their supervisors, and receiving a handover from a previous job incumbent. These responses were consistent among all employees who were interviewed whereby none of the answers were necessarily out of the norm. Although none of the responses were particularly out of the norm, it is interesting to note that all employees are engaging in behavior, such as the handover, without there being any clear policies or procedures in place to make the act mandatory.

The next theme that came about during the series of interviews is training and development. The 5 % learning time discussed in the critical analysis of UNDP policy documents was mentioned, whereby the employees stated that they did not have the time to take advantage of it. One of the reasons for the lack of time was due to the employees own personal issues and another was because of the high workload, whereby the employees stated “usually we have these rules but its not always applied on all teams, for the unit we have a lot of load and sometimes we don’t have time to have the 5%” (Employee D). The statement made by “Employee D” is very realistic and reveals that although the UNDP has a policy in place for learning time, it does not necessarily mean that the employees will have the opportunity to take advantage of it. Additionally, the employees were asked about what trainings that have received during their tenures at the UNDP whereby all of them mentioned the mandatory courses, competency based trainings, and technical trainings. The competency/soft skills trainings were a reoccurring pattern that was mentioned by every employee since they all participated in trainings in emotional intelligence, stress management, the 7-habits, leadership, and

teambuilding, which were specifically set up for employees working in the Country Office. From this pattern, it is evident that the management at the Country Office has a keen interest in investing in the soft skills of their employees. Arguably so, one could easily agree with this reasoning as technical skills are not sufficient to make a well-rounded employee. For instance, one can deem it unfavorable to have an employee who knows every nook and cranny of the business but is unable to handle stress or work with others. Furthermore, when employees were questioned about what additional trainings they would need to attain their career goals, they mentioned that they would need both competency/soft skills trainings and technical trainings. This response highlights the fact that the employees' learning desires are being fulfilled by the Country Office, which is not a sheer coincidence as all the employees' training needs have already been gathered by the HR department and placed into the whole office-learning plan. Also, the employees were asked about if they believe additional opportunities exist for them to gain additional skills at the UNDP in which the interviewees mentioned the Talent Development Center (TDC), the trainings provided by the office, support from their supervisor, and the HR department. As mentioned earlier, the TDC is an online platform that allows employees to have access to a variety of web-based courses depending on their needs. As such, the employees recognized that the TDC is a valuable tool that can indeed be used as a means to gain additional skills. Similarly, the trainings provided by the Country Office were also mentioned as a point of reference when discussing sharpening one's skills. Moreover, support from the supervisor was mentioned whereby multiple employees felt like they could simply ask their supervisors for advice whether it be strategic or simply revolving around on the job trainings. Likewise, the HR department was mentioned as a source to gain additional skills whereby one of the

employees stated that “HR does a leaning needs assessment where its like a survey, they ask employees what kind of trainings they want or need in order to perform better or for their career advancement” (Employee H). The fact that the employee mentioned career advancement in his/her response to this question is of absolute value as one of the reasons the question was asked was to evaluate the implication this may have on the employees’ loyalty to the organization. Also, training and development along with career advancement have often been linked to retention whereby “from an employee’s perspective, they aspire for career development, which is a primary motivational factor to remain in the organization.” (Chen, 2014).

In order to further explore the idea behind retention, the employees were asked about their career plans to which their responses were unanimous in that they would like to stay with the UNDP but are willing to moved based on what is available. From these responses, one can infer that the employees will remain loyal to the organization as long as the organization provides them with opportunities to either learn or to further their careers. As we have just examined, employees seem to be content and satisfied with the opportunities that the UNDP provides them with to gain additional skills, which begs the question; does the UNDP have mechanisms in place to ensure that service contract holders will have the opportunity to grow within the organization? During the interviews, one of the employee’s stated that “to grow in your position you have to apply outside and there is no chance to apply inside the UNDP as here in the building you cannot apply for another position unless there is a post” (Employee D). This is a serious issue as the majority of middle level employees working at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon have a low level of loyalty towards the organization and will pick up and leave based on what is in their best interest. As previously mentioned, this is a

characteristic associated with employees who belong to generation Y and should be taken into consideration when deciphering how to cater to their needs. In addition, it is important to note that many of the employees specified that it would be preferable to stay with the UNDP. As such, the Country Office must make sure that it has the proper mechanisms in place to retain their valuable employees, whether they are at the top, middle, or lower levels of the organization. Having said that, the UNDP must also work on policies and procedures directly targeted towards succession planning as it could be considered as one of the organizations major deficits in terms of talent management.

Another theme that came up during the interviews is performance appraisals, whereby the employees mainly stated that it is used to evaluate their performances. Interestingly enough, multiple interviewees mentioned that they are constantly receiving feedback on their performance. This is significant since the policies and procedures at the UNDP state that performance appraisals are to take place on an annual basis. As such, employees are once again exhibiting behaviors that are not necessarily in line or mandatory with regards to the UNDP policies and procedures. The act of providing continuous feedback allows both management and employees to receive real time information, which is of absolute value to both parties as behaviors can be adjusted before any actions that are irreversible and detrimental occur. Also, it is noteworthy to mention that the performance bonus is having a positive impact on the employees whereby it was mentioned that "we get the bonus at the end of the year after good performance in the year, it gives you something nice and a nice feeling" (Employee D). In this regard, the UNDP has done a good job in ensuring that their employees have a clear understanding of the link between both performance and reward.

Concerning policy awareness, the employees were asked about the HRM strategy, the talent management strategy, the talent philosophy, and the UN definition of talent. Almost unanimously, the responses among all employees was that they are not aware of any of the policies. In light of this, when asked about where they would go if they would like to learn about the policies, all of the employees knew exactly where to look as they mentioned the online intranet, the PoPP that is an abbreviation for policies and procedures, and the HR department. Upon hearing this response multiple times, I was intrigued and asked the last interviewee why they did not actually look up the information on the intranet or go to the HR department, in which the employee responded that they simply did not have the time to do so. This response also got me thinking that maybe it should not be entirely left up to the employee to discover what stands the UNDP has on talent and talent management. As such, it would be prudent for the HR department to consider integrating a brief on this subject matter into the onboarding process to safeguard that all employees have an understanding of all policies and especially those most relevant to them.

Another theme that was brought to light during the interviews was talent and the definition of talent. For the most part, all of the employees had their own definitions of talent but the responses mainly revolved around the notion that talent is attributed to a persons skills and abilities, or good performance at the workplace. Additionally, there was an opposing belief that came about with regards to idea that an individual is born talented versus the idea that talent is not something one possess at birth but can be acquired overtime. Although all the interviewees had their own definitions and views on what the definition of talent is, none of them knew or were able to elaborate on the UNDPs definition of talent. This is a significant issue as the employees do not

necessarily know what they are striving to become and what will help them in taking their careers to the next level. In addition, the employees may be directing their energy towards another area that the UNDP does not necessarily consider to be a value added to their organization. When the “I don’t know” response was received from the employees, I decided to probe them further with a scenario that went along the lines of “think about senior management at the UNDP and think about an employee that you have heard them refer to as talented. Why do you think they have reached that conclusion about that employee?”. Once asked this question, the employees provided me with immediate responses that revealed that although the employees could not provide me with a direct answer when asked about the UNDP’s definition of talent, they were aware of the stands the UNDP has on talent. This shows that although talent is not necessarily discussed at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon, it is in fact embedded in the culture.

With that being said, I do not think that it is sufficient to rely on underlying messages towards what the UNDP perceives as being a talent or not. As such, it would be of great value added for the management at the UNDP Country Office to sit down and actually define what the office perceives as talent. Although the UNDP may have its own definition of talent, it would be sensible for the Country Office to come up with its own refined statement, which would be somehow taking a decentralized approach to the meaning while staying in line with the centralized view held by UNDP headquarters globally.

The final theme that was discussed during the interviews revolved around whether talent management initiatives are inclusive or exclusive at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. When asked the question, all interviewees stated that talent

management is inclusive, whereby one employee went so far as to say that “no one is ever left out in anything we do, when we do teambuilding activities everyone is included; the security clerks, the drivers, the assistants, the officers...everyone is included up to the resident representative” (Employee F). Based on these responses received by the employees. I was convinced that the UNDP follows an inclusive approach with regards to talent management. This notion of inclusivity remained reinforced up until one of the employee’s made the following statement “there are certain trainings or certificates that are assigned by HQ and employees entitled to do them should hold a fixed term appointment and not another contract modality” (Employee H). This response made by employee X raised a red flag with regards to whether talent management initiatives are actually inclusive to all employees at the UNDP or not, especially since these trainings being assigned by HQ were leaving out the entire population of employees who hold service contracts. This point also raises the question, could the interviewees have stated that the approach to talent management is inclusive because they are not aware that HQ is assigning specific trainings to those who hold a fixed term appointment? Unfortunately, I cannot elaborate on this point as this question only came to light upon completion of the interviews. Putting this point aside, I would say that all in all the UNDP is doing a good job of ensuring that their employees feel like they are being included in talent management initiatives and practices, whether it be the case or not.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study critically evaluated and highlighted how current research ignores international organizations when discussing talent management and mostly revolves around the private sector. Additionally, the aim of this study is to critically evaluate the role and benefits of talent management in supporting international organization effectiveness. Also, this research serves to answer the question; How and in what ways can talent management initiatives improve the effectiveness of employees working, and work processes in international organizations, specifically at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon? As discussed throughout this research paper, having a proper framework for talent management can serve as the pillars for any organization, especially for those operating internationally in a more complex playing field. The different aspects of the talent management cycle each serve their own purpose towards ensuring that employees know what to do and what is expected of them, towards ensuring that they are constantly growing and developing their skills, towards ensuring that their performance is being fairly and properly managed, and towards ensuring that they are receiving fair compensation and benefits related to the market. Moreover, proper talent management has strong implications on employees levels of engagement and retention, and on an organizations ability build a competitive advantage in the market via human capital. All these factors paired together work towards improving both the effectiveness of employees along with the work processes in organizations.

In order to discuss what is occurring in terms of talent management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon, it was essential that I explore and critically analyze the policies and procedures related to the talent management cycle at the UNDP.

Additionally, employees who occupy middle level positions at the Country Office were of great interest to be interviewed for this study as I believed that they can expose whether the organization is actually inclusive in terms of talent management or not. The conclusions and recommendations that will be drawn in the next section are a direct result of both the critical analysis of UNDP policy documents, related to service contract holders, and content analysis of the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with middle level employees at the Country Office in Lebanon.

When discussing the onboarding process at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon, one cannot argue that there is no framework put in place to support employees when they first join the organization. Almost upon immediate signature of the contract, the employees have a meeting directly scheduled with both the Security Associate and Head of Human Resources to clarify and address issues related to the employees safety and benefits. Additionally, the interviews revealed that upon initiation to the organization, almost all employees received a handover from either a previous colleague or supervisor. Although providing a handover is not a part of the UNDPs official policy with regards to the orientation and onboarding of employees, the interviews revealed that this behavior has been exhibited time and time again by the employees own accord. With that being said, the interviews displayed that a thorough handover is a great way to ensure that new employees know exactly what is expected from them at work.

In reference to performance management at the UNDP, there are detailed policies and procedures to guide both managers and employees. The strengths of the evaluation process are that there is room for both the employee and supervisor to exchange information and that there is a clear link made between performance and reward, as the evaluation is directly tied to the employees bonus. Although the

guidelines state that the performance evaluation must be conducted only once per year, the interviews revealed that employees are constantly receiving feedback from their supervisors whenever necessary. This constant feedback displays that a culture of open and transparent communication is being fostered at the UNDP, which can only serve to work in the organizations benefit. Also and similarly to the handover discussed above, this seems to be another unspoken rule of thumb that is taking place at the Country Office in Lebanon, which once again serves to increase the effectiveness of both the employees and the organization as a whole.

Furthermore, the policies and processes related to training and development at the UNDP are both comprehensive and elaborate whereby each office has a Learning Manager who conducts a learning needs assessment and creates a whole office learning plan to cater to employee needs. Moreover, there are policies such as the 5% learning time and tools such as the online training development center that provide the employees with ample opportunities to develop their skills and abilities. During the interviews, the employees revealed that they were aware of everything the UNDP offers in terms of opportunities for training and development as they stated all of the above mentioned tools and policies. Additionally, using a life history approach that placed an emphasis on career trajectories unveiled that many of the employees occupying positions at the middle level of the organization have experienced career development. This is due to the fact that many of them initially started working at the lower level positions of the organization as either service contract holders, volunteers, or even interns. Continuous growth and development is not only crucial in ensuring that employees maintain high levels of engagement and effectiveness, but is also fundamental in ensuring that the employees remain with the organization all together.

Also, it is important to highlight that many of the employees occupying middle level positions at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon belong to generation Y, which is a generation that is known to greatly value training and development. Additionally, employees from generation Y prefer rewards that are immediate, which the UNDPs compensation and benefits scheme touches upon briefly by providing service contract holders with their pension benefits and bonus upfront.

While exploring and analyzing the UNDP policies and procedures related to service contract holders, I could not identify any policy related to succession planning or critical skills gap analysis. As such, it is safe to say the UNDP has a deficit in terms of talent management initiatives directed towards service contract holders. This shortage in the talent management policy could create an issue with regards to retention of the middle level employees at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. This inference has been made because when asked about their career plans, every employee interviewed mentioned that they would like to stay with the UNDP but were willing to move based on what is available. As such, none of the employees working at the Country Office have blind loyalty to the organization and are willing to leave if the UNDP is unable to provide them with opportunities for growth and career development. In this regard, using both succession planning initiatives and critical skills gap analysis as a tool, can play a key role in identifying the employees that the UNDP cannot risk losing. In turn, management can focus their resources on developing the skills and abilities of these key employees in order to prepare them to become the future leaders and champions of the organization.

Lastly, the interviews touched upon two issues that revolved around policy awareness and on the inclusivity of talent management processes at the UNDP Country

Office in Lebanon. With regards to policy awareness the interviews revealed that the employees were not aware of important policies and strategies such as the HRM strategy, the talent management strategy, the talent philosophy, and the UN definition of talent. In reference to the inclusivity of talent management initiatives, all employees shared the same belief, which revolves around the notion that all employees are included in all initiatives directed towards managing talent. As previously discussed in the analysis section of the interviews, one of the employee's made a statement that raised a red flag with regards to whether the talent management process is actually inclusive or not. The employee stated that some trainings have been assigned by HQ and solely target employees holding fixed term appointments. If this is the case, maybe the talent management process is not actually inclusive, which would be contrary to the popular held belief by the middle level employees at the Country Office in Lebanon. Unfortunately, this is one of the limitations of the study, which will be discussed in the last section, as none of the documents, policies, or procedures related to employees holding fixed term appointments were analyzed or reviewed.

In light of the above, the recommendations for the enhancement of talent management policies are as follows. First and foremost, the orientation handbook should be launched immediately in order to facilitate the onboarding and integration of new employees. Moreover, the UNDP should consider incorporating handover notes into their onboarding process as the employees revealed that the handover process was valuable in contributing to them knowing what is expected from them at work. For instance, handover notes could be included in the mandatory documents to be submitted by the previous job incumbent prior to leaving the organization. Another recommendation for the onboarding and orientation process at the UNDP is to include

detailed information on all policy related matter such as the HRM strategy, the talent management strategy, the talent philosophy, and the UN definition of talent. When the employees responded that they were unaware of all the policies mentioned above, it led to the notion that this information should not be optional and as a result should not be left up to the employees own accord to search for the information. As such, another recommendation for the onboarding process is to include a detailed brief on all policy related matters that directly affect the employee. Understandably, one can argue that the new employee will be overwhelmed with too much information, but the Country Office could come up with a timeframe that dictates when these issues should be discussed, maybe a month into the employees new assignment.

With regards to performance management, my first instinct was to recommend that the frequency of the performance appraisal be raised to at least twice a year, but the interviews revealed that the employees have been receiving continuous feedback from their supervisors on a need to be basis. As such, having the performance appraisals take place more than once annually may be counterproductive in that it will simply contribute to more paperwork and bureaucracy. In light of the above and as long as the employees are in fact receiving constant feedback on their performance, I would recommend that the performance management process remain the same at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. With that being said, I would encourage that the performance appraisal process be documented more than once annually only for problem cases in order to ensure that everything is recorded and documented for future use.

In addition, it is highly recommended that the UNDP pay attention the deficit in terms of policies and procedures with regards to succession planning and critical

skills gap analysis. Addressing these two issues will have a significant impact on the office as it will enable them to retain talents and take advantage of the existing human capital in their organization. Moreover, the office should come up with their own refined definition of the term “talent”, which should be clearly and transparently communicated to employees at all levels of the organization. Although the UNDP has their own definition of talent, the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon should consider using one of the tips discussed when assessing how companies should cope when managing talent on a global scale, which revolves around allowing flexibility for both centralized and decentralized strategies. As such, the office would be invoking a decentralized approach to defining talent whilst ensuring that they remain in line with the centralized view held by UNDP headquarters globally. This approach will help ensure that all cultural diversity and differences are taken into consideration when discussing what constitutes talent.

The final consideration and recommendation I have for the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon is to truly look into their talent management initiatives with regards to whether they are inclusive or not. If it turns out that some employees are in fact being excluded from talent management initiatives as a result of their contract modalities, then the UNDP should pay very close attention and address this issue immediately by following a more inclusive approach to managing talent. The contract modality that an employee holds should not be a deciding factor in whether an employee is eligible for a particular training or not. Additionally, excluding individuals from talent management initiatives due to their contract modalities will only serve to foster feelings of isolation and resentment towards the organization and maybe even towards employees who have the privilege of holding fixed term appointments.

5.1 Limitations and Future Policy and Research Development

The limitations of the study and implications for future policy and research development will be discussed in the following section. One of the main limitations of this study is that it placed an emphasis on only one UNDP Country Office located in the world, which happens to be in Lebanon. As such, the research has the potential to be replicated around the world with other UNDP Country Offices serving in different countries. Additionally, only 10 employees holding middle level positions at the country office were interviewed for the sake of this study. Increasing the number of employees could have helped to yield additional results that could have been beneficial for this study. Moreover, a focus was placed on service contract holders working at the country office. As such, the study was restricted to the analysis to service contract holders at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. Due to various factors, some of which include time constraint and logistics, it was not possible to explore if service contract holders who are scattered around the country are also benefiting from the same talent management initiatives that employees at the country office are benefiting from. As such, future research could focus on exploring what initiatives are being targeted towards employees who are not working at the Country Office. Additionally, senior management was not interviewed during this study, which could have served to clarify a few issues regarding the Country Office's definition of talent.

Finally, policies and procedures targeted towards employees who hold fixed term appointments were not analyzed during this study, which would have allowed for a comparison to be made between both policies in order to see if differences in talent management policies and procedures actually exist. This comparison would have been very beneficial for this study as this issue was brought to light when one of the

employee's mentioned some trainings are assigned by HQ to only target fixed term contract holders. As such, future research can elaborate on this point and reveal whether the approach to talent management at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon is inclusive or not.

APPENDIX

1. Interview Questions

Interview Protocol- Based on Musson`s Life History Approach (exploratory interview)

Part 1

- Demographic Information:
- Career Trajectory/History:
- Awareness of HRM strategy and TM:
- Current Training/Future Training:
- Future Career Plan:

Part 2

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?
2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?
3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?
4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP? Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP? Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?
5. Can you outline what your career plan is?
6. What do you understand by the terms talent?
7. What is your organization`s talent philosophy?
8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

2. Invitation Letter/E-Mail to Be Sent to Participants

Dear Mr./Ms. Employee,

My name is Nadine Ghalayini and I am a graduate student at the American University of Beirut, and currently enrolled in the Master in Human Resources Management program. As part of the program, and under the supervision of Dr. Beverly Metcalfe, Visiting Associate Professor at the Olayan School of Business and Yusuf Sidani, I am conducting a research study as part of my final project in the MHRM program at AUB. Hence, I am contacting you to invite you to take part in a study titled Talent Management in International Organizations.

The aim of the study is to critically evaluate the role and benefits of talent management in supporting international organization effectiveness. The results of the study will open doors for future research and will help in the enhancement or development of talent management policies and procedures.

Your participation is very important since you are an employee at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon currently holding a Service Contract at Levels 5 or 6, which is typically associated with Assistant level positions.

If you wish to participate, we will schedule a meeting that will last approximately 30 minutes. The meeting will include a small introduction about the study and later an interview about your education, career, current experience, and thoughts on talent management initiatives occurring at your organization. The interview will be recorded

and anonymous. Only the researchers will have access to the information, and after the research is completed the data will be kept with Dr. Metcalfe and myself. Additionally, please note that you may find attached a letter of consent that I kindly request you read and sign once you have confirmed your interest in participating in the study.

Thank you for your time and your assistance is highly appreciated.

Nadine Ghalayini

+961 3 078148

3. Letter of Consent

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am conducting with Dr. Beverly Metcalfe as part of my final project in the MHRM program at AUB. This research focuses on Talent Management in International Organization, specifically at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon. The purpose of this study is to critically evaluate the role and benefits of talent management in supporting international organization effectiveness. Additionally, the research gathered will help in the enhancement of talent management policies and procedures at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon.

I am asking you to participate in an interview, so I will ask you about your educational background, your career experience, and work experience in the context of understanding talent management. Moreover, I will use a series of questions to explore exactly what is considered as being talent management within your organization. Please stop me at any time if you have questions about the study.

I will be interviewing approximately 10 employees from the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon who hold a Service Contract of level 5 and 6, which is typically associated to Assistant level positions. Moreover, the collected research will be used in my final project in the MHRM program at AUB. Your individual privacy and the confidentiality of the information you provide will be maintained in all published and written date analyses resulting from the study. The findings will be published in aggregate form. I will assign a pseudonym to each respondent and will only be using selected quotes in my final paper. No information that allows identifying you or any other respondent will be revealed. Before we analyze the data that is collected, I will ensure that no personal

identifiers are included. Furthermore, all data files will be securely stored in my supervisor's laptop as well as mine, which are both protected with passwords and locks.

You were informed about this research by the recruitment e-mail you received and you agreed to participate in this research. Participants in this study were recruited based on the following criteria: Service Contract holders of level 5 and 6.

Participation should take approximately 30 minutes. Please understand that your participation is entirely on a voluntary basis and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. There is no more than minimal risk associated with this research. There is no direct benefit to you as a participant, but there are benefits associated with enhancing the talent management policies and procedures at the UNDP Country Office in Lebanon.

You will receive no payment or compensation for your participation.

If at any time and for any reason, you would prefer to not answer any questions, please feel free to skip those questions by saying 'skip this question'. If at any time you would like to stop participating, please tell me. We can take a break, stop and continue at a later date, or stop altogether. You will not be penalized for deciding to stop participation at any time. Refusal to participate in the study will involve no loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled now will it affect your employability or your relationship with AUB.

I would like to tape record this interview so as to make sure that I remember accurately all the information you provide. I will keep these files on my password-protected computer and my supervisor, Dr. Beverly Metcalfe and myself will only use them. These recorded files will be deleted after the research is completed and the results are submitted. You may choose to participate without being recorded in which case I will try to write down as many notes as necessary, and the interview might take a bit more time.

If you have any questions, you are free to ask them now. If you have questions, concerns or complaints about this research study later, you may contact my supervisor or myself:

Dr. Beverly Metcalfe

Phone: + 961 1 374374 ext.3590

E-mail: bm47@aub.edu.lb

Ms. Nadine Ghalayini

Phone: +961 3 078148

E-mail: nkg01@mail.aub.edu

If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about research or your rights as a participant, please contact the AUB Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (SBSIRB) at AUB:

Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board

American University of Beirut

Bliss Street, Beirut

Phone: + 961 1 374374 ext.5455

E-mail: irb@aub.edu.lb

Records will be monitored and may be audited by the IRB while assuring confidentiality.

This consent form was attached to the recruitment e-mail for your reference.

Consent to participate

Are you interested in participating in this study?

Consent to Record Interview

May I record this interview?

Consent to Quote from Interview

I may wish to quote from this interview either in the presentations or articles resulting from this work. A pseudonym will be used in order to protect your identity.

Do you allow me to quote from this interview?

Confirmation of Consent to Record Interview

May I record this interview?

Researcher's Name and Date:

Signature

4. Transcribed Interviews

4.1 Employee A

Age: 28 years old

Length of service: 4 ½ years (around)

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

Education: Economics at St Joseph University, Executive MBA at Sagesse University

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

Blom Bank for 9 months as a teller and customer service Officer

UNDP in July 2013 roles started off as an intern in 2011 for 2 months in finance department and now I am lucky to work in this department.

So you started off as an intern and then became a service contract holder, correct?

Yes

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work? So how do you know what's expected from you at work?

My boss, I have a plan everyday I have a plan to do and if there are other work to do there is a priority and I ask my boss everyday what I have to do and I am working day by day.

So it's mostly with your boss, does your job description play a role?

Yes, of course I have a ToRs

And what about, do you guys go through a performance type of situations do you discuss your performance back and forth with your boss do you guys set goals together?

Yes of course, and every year we have an evaluation with my boss.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

Yes, I have made a lot of mandatory courses, like ethics and sexual harassment courses, then I have a stress management last year and two weeks ago I have a first aid training with the red cross. And there were no specific training directed towards you right? No Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP? Not really

Have you been receiving any e-mails from the talent development unit? Yes, usually I receive a lot of e-mails but I don't usually read it.

Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?

Yes, of course. By doing these training and then to develop my skills.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

As I am working in the finance department, surely I plan to be after many years a head of finance. If not, as a project manager or if I want to leave UNDP I prefer to work outside Lebanon maybe in Dubai. As an accounting or as a finance

If you leave and move to Dubai u would be moving to the private sector or would you want to stay with the UN system?

If I can work with the UN system its amazing and if not yes I can move to the private sector.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

Maybe I need more training in Finance as maybe in negotiation skills and leadership to act as a manager.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

Talent means what a person can do and "mayzo" (distinguish) from another person.

That makes them different and distinguishes themselves from other people right?

Yes, And with this talent he can teach other colleagues and other persons to be able to do.

So do you think its something in terms of skills or in terms of personality or in terms of ability is someone who is a talent who works hard at being a talent or someone who is born is as a talent? I think it is someone's skills and abilities. How has talent been defined in the UN system? Uhm... talent. If your thinking of senior management lets say whoever they consider being talented do you know why they consider that person to be talented or who they decide is a talent and why Maybe because “be coon emayaz bi hal shaghle eno howe awe bi hal shaghle so mishen heik bi oule eno howe talented ou lezem bi hal oussas ee saed ghayro When you mean strong in the area you mean a technical expertise? Yes of course, and they must invest in him So you notice that there is a pattern that they want to invest in that person? Yes. So they must invest or they do invest? They must invest.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy? I don't know really about talent philosophy,

Does it go hand in hand with how talent has been defined in the UN system what you said that it's someone who has technical expertise. Do you think that may be the talent philosophy? Maybe but I have no idea.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

Of course, they include all the staff in terms of talent management they send all the courses for all the staff to make these courses and develop themselves to be able to move and to promote to be promoted more. So you believe that the talent management activities include everybody and nobody is excluded? Yes

4.2 Employee B

Age: 25 years old

Length of Service: 2 years almost

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

Education: Bachelors degree of Science studied accounting in LAU; MBA emphasis in Finance at LAU

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

Experience: Started working with a distributor company called Al Sultan foodstuff. I worked there for around 3 months accounting department and among with other departments working not internship

Intern at the UNDP Procurement department

2 months later I was contracted as an individual contractor IC for almost year and a half and then I signed an SC 5 contract all with the procurement department.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

Yes at first I was lucky to have received a proper handover from my colleague who was working in my place. She told me everything from what is required from myself, what is required from my colleagues and how the work is distributed among us, what is actually required from management as well in order to know exactly what my scope of work is and my terms of reference is. So she went through the terms of reference with you?

Yes, as a start for the individual contractor, and then with time it was communicated with my direct supervisor what is required from me as additional works, thing that I can do and I am responsible for. Do you and your supervisor sit down periodically to talk about these things? Is there some of performance assessment

There's nothing actually formal it's not like a weekly meeting but from time to time we do that continuously.

So you have just been recruited as an SC 5 so you have not done the performance appraisal yet right? Yes exactly.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

I recall doing two trainings one of them is stress management training last year and the other one is the bridge training at the retreat we did so the team building? Yes exactly
Have you done any other trainings or any certifications being at the procurement department?

The Red Cross training. Is there any other training you have done related to procurement? Not yet, but soon though. There more like certificates atlas certificates are they mandatory? Yes they are.

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

Regarding the talent management I'm not really aware of how its going or what to do but I receive emails from HR regarding that but I don't really go into them into details but I'm looking forward to learn about it and to get involved. So you are receiving e-mails from the talent development unit right? Yes but I don't go into detail I just read superficially. (Does not know about the global talent development unit)

Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP? I'm sure that there are opportunities to gain additional skills whether they are like, you would take trainings that develop your skills your leadership skills your negotiation skills or whether you get actually involved within your work expertise to gain these skills on your own whether its reading I think we have in UNDP this platform where you can actually register trainings that develop areas that your are

interested in So your talking about the TDC now? I think so yes so your not using the TDC? Not yet but I went through it but I just want to see what are the trainings that are usual for my situation I mean if I take now the leadership skills I prefer to take it at a later stage so there are things that I a interested in now that may develop my skills during this stage. So you have received a full briefing on the TDC? No

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

For now to gain experience as much a possible and then to reach a senior position where I can use my expertise and then within the procurement department of course so within you procurement department here? Yes, exactly. I want to do certificates and to complete the CIPS atlas training. So you see long-term goal remaining here with the UNDP procurement department in Lebanon. Yes. In Lebanon for now basically and then at some point I would also like to gain international experience so you goal is to internationalize? Exactly lets say in the states.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims? Negotiation skills training, leadership skills training that's basically what I have in mind Anything technical or is it all competency based? Procurement training and supply chain management trainings

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

Something that a person. I believe it is somehow heritage sometimes. You can of course develop your talents by focusing on something lets say you would like to do but you don't really know how to do it you can practice and you can exercise and reach that talent but mainly it is something you are born with you have it if you don't have it and you want to have it you can work on it and you can reach it. Okay so if your not born with it you don't have it but if you want to have it and you love it there are people who

want to draw things they just like to do it but they don't know how to do it they are not born with that loose hand so they just worked on it. So is talent born or? It is born but I doesn't mean you can't reach it

So if your not born with it and you reach it are you a talent? Not really, you're talented if you actually reach it at some point but your born talented if you really know how to do it at first.

How has talent been defined in the UN system?

Ummmm So, when you take a look at senior management if they say this person is talented, why would they be talented? Probably because they has seen something maybe someone is very organized. maybe someone has the prior experience that made them write reports very easily or they have an ear for something and they take minutes in a very organized way. Okay they are talented but they need to have prior experience to do what they are doing once or twice at least to be talented in the eyes of management.

Okay so that's what you think it means to be talented at the UNDP? Yes. And do you think someone having technical expertise has something to do with that? Yes, like the least technical expertise, a minimum 1 year of experience like someone who is talented lets say even they can have the experience in their education in their prior experience not necessarily work experience but they need to have. They need to have done the thing they are doing at least once or twice in order to do it better. In order to call them talented.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

For me specifically/ personally. I believe I am talented because I am fast I do things very fast without doing mistakes lets say, this is my organizational talent.

No, I mean what is the organizations the UNDPs talent philosophy, what is the companies philosophy on talent? Do you know? Not really, their point of view on talent? Yes I mean they encourage talent obviously by sending e-mails and trainings about that. They embrace talent when they see it they comment they do encourage so you have experienced that and witnessed it? Yes but the idea is that I have witnessed it but I don't really call it talent myself because this is me actually working. Do you think this is the actual philosophy? Yes it's a way of.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

It is inclusive, all of the people, because lets say in the UN there are people who show there talent who are showy they don't hide their talent they are more, not conservative, but they embrace it within themselves they don't really show it or talk about it but management here at the UNDP they talk to everyone (about) they encourage everyone, they include everyone its inclusive. None of our colleagues is exclusive from any comment from any encouragement, from any lets say if I received a good feedback about something I did my colleagues they have been sent to trainings abroad to Jordan in order to develop their skills so its inclusive.

So your colleagues were sent for this training and you weren't? Yes why?

Because I need to do the initial training which is a pre requisite in order to do the training. Your time will come to go to the training? Exactly.

4.3 Employee C

Age: 27

Length of service: 1 year and 4 months

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

Bachelors in information technology and a diploma in human resources management

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

I first started working immediately after graduating in my university at Beirut Arab University I started working in the HR department. I worked there for about 4 years. My tasks varied in different aspects in HR including recruitment, training, personnel everything and the HRIS and then I moved to the UNDP where I started working as a UN Volunteer in the HR unit. 3 months later I started, well I changed my contract, I got a new contract but it's basically the same unit in the UNDP. So you moved to a contract modality of SC 5 right? Yes.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

Definitely, my boss gives always-clear instructions and clear expectations of what is required from me. Is there anything else? When you first started working here how did you know what to do on your first day? We has a meeting with my supervisor, Head of HR, and she told me what plans were supposed to be accomplished during my contract basically and what is expected in general. And who taught you? My colleagues and my supervisor. Did your job description come into play during this? Definitely.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

We had the basic and advanced security trainings which were online and we did the stress management training with the UNDP country office that's about it. Did you participate in the mandatory courses? Yes they are about 4 courses. Have you take any

other courses or any other forms of training? At the UNDP no. What about at your old job did you take any kinds of training over there? Ya definitely, we took stress management, communication skills, compensation and benefits trainings, train the trainer and change management. So you received these trainings over the span of 4 years? Yes

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

I think I have a brief overview of it but I'm not directly involved. But I know that they, as a human resources at UNDP they try to engage as much personnel as possible into various trainings at the UNDP country office basically. Okay and do you know about the talent development unit at the UNDP? Yes So you do receive their e-mails as well?

Yes I do receive the global e-mails And do you go through them, do you find them beneficial? Yes sometimes I go into them and read they are really interesting. Are you aware of the strategy then? The official strategy I don't know, no I'm not really aware of it but I just know that its like I said they try to engage as much as possible.

Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?

Definitely, the LMS/TDC is a huge portal and library if you want that can provide various trainings about basically anything, you just go in there and you look for what you need. Anything else? My supervisor basically gives us on the job trainings, she gives instructions on how to do things better and how to think strategically about them. So ya my boss plays a huge role in training.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

My career plan is basically just working on my skills, enhancing them and then eventually assuming more responsibilities at UNDP. Is that your ultimate goal or do you

envision yourself going somewhere else/ what is your career aspiration? Of course to become a manager but it has to come gradually. Do you plan on staying with the UN system? Definitely in Lebanon or do you plan on internationalizing? Id like to gain more experience, yes internationalizing may be an option it depends on how it goes. Do you plan on staying with the UNDP or would you like to branch out with another UN agency? It depends on the opportunities presented.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

I think more trainings on the UN system as a whole and the human resources aspect of it and trainings on some skills organizational skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

Talent is someone who has higher capacity to do things, which in an organization can be translated to top performers, top productivity/highest productivity, highest quality of work it has different and many aspects.

How has talent been defined in the UN system? (have you ever heard someone here at the UNDP be referred to as a talent? Why do you think they have that perception of the person?)

As an HR assistant I've heard different projects talk about different people that are very important for the success of a certain project, which someone defines that they are the talent which are indispensable. And why are they important? Do you know exactly why? Because they do their work fully and very devoted to doing/ finishing everything on certain timelines, they respect their deadlines its all about quality as well. And they always talk about ways to retain staff and how to present the opportunities for them to grow so as to retain them.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

I don't think I know the whole UNDPs talent philosophy I'm not aware of that. Do you know about how you can find out about the philosophy? I can ask my supervisor or I can just go online and find, we have this portal that we can access anything the intranet right? Yes, the guidelines the UNDP PoPP where you can find anything guidelines procedures, I think I can find it there. So you can find it if you looked for it? Yes, and I can ask my supervisor where to find it because she's aware.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

I think they include everybody, well at least at the UNDP country office. They do include, whenever we have a training they ask people from different units whether they would be interested or not so I think it's inclusive.

4.4 Employee D

Age: 36 year old

Length of Service: 9 years and a ½

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

BBA graduate from Hagaezian University, with double major in business administration with emphasis MIS. I have also studied many IT related courses Oracle administrator and professional, Microsoft certified professional. then I studied the Microsoft certification/ I am Microsoft certified administrator and engineer

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

I graduated in 2005 and I started working immediately in the Private sector in a company called MIS. Mainly I didn't work as a business or management, I started working my career in It. The company was all related to everything concerning

information technology, it network systems hardware and software, so mainly we were having clients that we go to them and do all the It related contracts. This is for MIS my first experience.

Then I worked at AUB Faculty of Health and Sciences almost/for less than 2 years as a Research Assistant but mainly I was a System Administrator.

Then I applied to UNDP I did the necessary test and interviews and I was accepted. I started working in UNDP May 2009 until now. Have you been in the same position?

Mainly to me I don't see I switched a lot in my domain. I started working in the same position and maybe still working the same. Okay but did you have a career transition,

what level were you recruited at? Some new things were added to my post for sure

many new things because first of all I had a manager and this manager left so a new manager came and so we had to do a switch and new things have been added to my

ToRs and that's it. So you started off at the UNDP at what level? I started as an SSA,

but I suffered a lot because I stayed almost 3 ½ years doing the same job as an SC or as a fixed term. Until 2012 I have been given an SC 5 position then in 2016 or 2017 I

became an SC 6. I jumped in the level but as for work I do same things. The same duties and responsibilities? Ya, but more duties and more responsibilities especially after

Eliana left (my previous manager) and we have to divide the load of work between me

and Chahid (my manager now) so a new ToR and a new work. It's a new job you went

up a level a new job right? A new job but mainly as an IT I see still doing the same

things as if.. Routine? Yes but we always create something new with the new

technologies we follow the new technologies so every time we create something new for new experiences.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

For sure, since the first day I came to UNDP I have a clear vision of what are my duties and my tasks and how to apply them to be how do you have a clear vision? We as an IT department we have to cover the needs of all IT needed, as for infrastructure support, everything concerning the IT. We have a vision that is made by management and especially by the IT also team. To cover all the needs for the UNDP. Is there any kind of form that you have your duties and responsibilities outlined on. We did a couple of, we were 3 in the department and everyone has his role and yes we did between us as an IT team we divided the load of work and what to do. So those are divided in your job description? Mainly yes, something's less something's more its not 100% accurate. Sometimes we have much more things to do but they are not related to the TOR but we do them because we are the only IT people. Do you have these regular discussions with your supervisor about what's expected is there this open communication. Me and Chahid as a team, every week we have a conversation about what's needed, what's coming up for us and the challenges and all the tools that we need so that we do the job on prefect and accurate with time. And you guys also discuss this, correct me if I'm wrong, during the performance assessment right? The evaluation, every year we have to do the evaluation and usually the evaluation is done by my manager and the operation manager, they evaluate my work and you evaluate yourself as well right? I evaluate myself almost daily. Do you feel like that helps you? Sure when you feel/ find yourself doing a good job following the time standards and performing in a good way and all the bonus, we get the bonus at the end of the year after good performance in the year it gives you something nice.. a nice feeling.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

I've heard a little about it but to outline exactly what is it, no I don't have a lot of information. But I heard about it. Would we be able to say that this information is relatively easily accessible/ do you receive e-mails from the talent development center? Maybe we receive to our e-mails, we receive e-mails about doing online training and to do some online courses to improve the skills with certain standards. So you receive them from the global TDC and also from the head of HR right? We receive sometime from the HR about certain training that is coming up so that we. But have you noticed the e-mails from the talent center globally or on the yammer chat? Yammer, ya we heard about yammer 2 years someone from HQ came and explained to us about the yammer but I don't think we interact very much with this application. And you have access to the intranet right? Yes and there the TDC do you use it? I tried a couple of times to do courses online related to my career as an IT I tried to do some courses online. I did a couple of courses for free and yes sometimes I try. Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?

I think after 9 years, if you want you can develop, if you have the time and less load of work you can have the time, you can develop your career more and study a couple of courses and to do certain trainings so do the additional course on the TDC? Yes, or some other outside courses o study maybe to do an MBA or something. So you were talking about the workload, do you know about the 5% learning time? Usually, we have these rules but its not always applied its not applied on all teams, as for the IT we have a lot of load and sometimes we don't have time to have the 5%.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

Now I am an ICT support assistant maybe I see myself after 5 years maybe I am an IT manager but I have to work more on my skills and to improve my knowledge more and experience. I will apply to do an MBA add to my mind and 13 years of experience and also I want to work more on my communication skills verbal and written. And do you see yourself growing with the UNDP. I see as a local the system it's a little bit hard to grow. You can stay in your position for almost 9-10 years if you don't apply outside or you switch you will not grow, you will stay in this position maybe increase your steps or have a new ToRs but to apply for a switch career or for a higher position it's a little bit hard and is it just a little bit hard because there is no place? Because there is no place and because if you have to grow in your position you have to apply outside and there is no chance to apply inside the UNDP as here in the building you cannot apply for another position unless there is a post Unless someone leaves? Yes, unless someone leaves. So I was going to ask you about what additional training will be needed to support career aims but you touched on communications skills, MBA, verbal and written skills is there anything else that your would need? Yes sure, as an IT we should always be up to date with the new technologies, to follow up the fast improvements and new technology. So as an IT you have to always be up-to-date with the latest things going and for sure you have to every year or every 6 months you have to do a new training and to have a new experience in your field? Yes, in my field because IT is very broad so you can have training in network, in training in database, training as a system administrator, training as a security, you have many as web developer.. and these ones you would need right? If you want to follow my needs in my position so I have to choose the courses that the new technologies the new courses for what I'm working in okay so technical based on what you're working on? Yes, but in general if you want to

apply for a higher position or apply outside you have to increase your knowledge you have to study a lot you have to have general and very broad information about everything in IT not only specified in certain things.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

Talent you can define it as sometimes you can say talent it's a gift from god, sometimes this gift from god you have to work on it and add to it your experience your touch, your power how to manage things everything... every person in my understanding god created him with a certain talent, he has to know his strong points and work on his talents so that he can improve this talent. As for me, this is how I see talent but to me every person has his special talent and his touch. He has to add to it his experience his strengths.

How has talent been defined in the UN system? What do you mean by defined? For example senior managers, think of an employee they say is talented, why do you think that they would imply that this person is talented? He is special in something he has his touch his special way in dealing with certain thing whether its work or he has other gifted talent from god or whatever so managers they decide if this one is talented in his job if he do his job in a perfect way in a very special way creative way with his special touch. Do you think technical expertise comes into play? Technical expertise yes, when you have this talent you don't have to just leave it like that you have to work on it to make it grow and improve and for sure you have to work on your talents so that I will be much much better and you can use it in a better way.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

I don't have much about it, but I see that everybody who's working in UNDP is for sure he or she is very talented person they are all educated with special gifts given from god

and they are very smart and they are very smart and doing a good job in the best way.

Do you think that you could easily find out what the talent philosophy is at the UNDP?

Easily find out? You think you can ask someone about it or look it up online? Maybe

this is more field of the HR to give us the point and give us the outline about and to

show us and you can also use the PoPP and the intranet to find out right? Sure the

intranet, now a days you can its very easy for you to have all these information

whenever you use Google or you use the UNDP websites.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

Look outside Lebanon, I think as HQ or if you are an international or working outside I

think its inclusive, it included everybody, in Lebanon as my experience sometimes I

saw it is exclusive its not inclusive to everybody. You have to work to get your things.

You have to fight for your things here and you will not easily get them. Okay, but you

have been included in certain trainings right? I have been included for a couple of

trainings but not related to my IT domain they are some good training that will help you

improve your personality, improve your work and your way of dealing at your job. So

you're talking about? You have participated in? Stress Management, team building so

you've been part of the community ones but you haven't received a training in your

domain? Actually, I had to work hard more on myself and pay from my own budget to

improve my IT knowledge because when I came to UNDP I felt that they just need to

take from you all your experience okay but they don't have this strategy to improve

your knowledge in a way that you improve your work. They want someone who already

has this experience and applies this experience. In the public sector or private sector

there are many many people that are educated in the same level and maybe with the

same experience so they don't have this time for someone to come and learn new

things. They want someone who has experience to come and just apply his experience in the position. So you haven't gotten your training in your domain/ do you see other employees granted the opportunities to receive those trainings? Yes I saw, but I don't know how is the criteria or how maybe they are much smarter in how to catch the opportunity.

4.5 Employee E

Age: my age is 38 years old

Length of Service: here at UNDP, I completed my 10th year

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

I have no a Masters degree, a Maîtres it's the old French system in Geography environment and land use management

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

I started working 17 years ago, actually I started working in a different field not very far but in a consultancy field in GIS consultant and remote sensing because it was a tool that I studied at university and that I had opportunities to work in projects for mapping and data management analysis of satellite imagery and air photography. And I worked as such for 7 years and also working as a consultancy in environmental studies. When I moved to UNDP it was like not a shift in the career like I shifted to more administration and management type of work. It's a personal choice that I did. So you started off as an SC 5 level Assistant and then level 6 Senior level assistant. Yes, that's right.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

Yes, of course. First there is the most basic thing which are the terms of reference but of course with time you forget about them and we adapt to the working environment to the

requirements because you know the working environment changes with time and the basis are there still the same and of course with time you/ we have the chance to have you know if you are a bit curious and we have the chance or we can learn new things and this is how we can fit our position and learn new things. Okay, and does your supervisor or did you have any form of hand over when you first came here or any direct discussions with the supervisor what else happened when you first started for you to know what to do? Yes sure, because personally it was totally new I never worked in an organization, I worked more as a consultant so I had my own way of working so yes there is an inception when you join a team and there is a certain set up especially in a position of a Junior Assistant. Meaning that handling administrative tasks that I needed to know the system and the stakeholders the person that we deal with So who walked you through that? My supervisor, because I wasn't/ the handover was done by my supervisor and not by a previous colleague because there was a gap with the vacancy that I filled and there's also at when I started the HR who provided the contractual guidance and if I had anything to ask I would refer to them. And do you and your boss sit down together annually to discuss goals and targets and such things? Like personal or work? At work ? I mean like the personal goals at work? Yes, actually its not done on an annual basis its done at need be because there is a common understanding of what is expected of me and what is also what I expect from the team and whenever there is something a gap or on the contrary thank god this is what is happening when there is a positive feedback or a negative feedback we would directly discuss it. So you talk daily? Not daily On a need to be basis? Yes, and we do that also if there is nothing to talk about we feel like there's a long time that we didn't discuss a few things then we do that.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

I've received you know the trainings like the mandatory trainings. Of course, its mandatory to all and we have to go through them throughout our career and every time there are new training or things to do and there are other trainings that are not very cooperate that are organized by the office we take part in them like.. there are ones that are personal management, emotional intelligence and they are more of like how to be more efficient and I forgot the one we took two years ago it was a very nice one

There's stress management or team building? Other than team building Seven Habits?

Yes the seven habits. Anything else note worthy? No I don't recall. There are other kind of trainings or workshops that are technical and that we participate in within the projects so you have participated in technical workshops? In some of them.

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

To be honest, I have heard about it through first the correspondence, the corporate e-mails that we receive and also it has been raised several times but I didn't have much curiosity to dig into it so I know the headlines but not the details. So you are receiving the e-mails from the global talent development yes, and is it the same of the e-mails that we receive from the local HR team? It depends Is it the same as the learning No, it depends HR tends to focus a little more on what's available currently. So you do know where to look to find the talent management strategy of the UNDP, we have a strategy at the country office as well that we are asked about each year to fill in no? there is a questionnaire. Yes, so the questionnaire that your talking about meaning the learning needs I am just checking if it's the same as the talent management do you feel like the questionnaire is beneficial/ you are able to put in what is needed in terms of learning?

Yes, sure and we submit it each year and yup.

Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?

Yes, because there are platforms to do that and opportunities there is an encouragement from the office and from the supervisors as well just the idea of having a few things mandatory means that there is something there and where we can dig in more. Yes. I truly believe that there is an opportunity to develop our skills but the challenges personally is to have really time to do it because we are working in a context of being really short on deadlines and submitting projects on time it's a totally different thing but they are there and the tools are there. So when you talk about time you, all service contract holders have 5% learning time, so when you talk about this do you feel like your being able to take advantage of that 5% learning time? No, again I'm talking very personal experience and it depends on the priorities personal priorities like I am very meticulous and maybe demanding at work and perfectionist so that would take off my time to complete my work and it takes me more with less time to do my learning things and I hope to work on that shortly. So you do believe that there are additional opportunities to gain additional skills and you know where to go if wanted to right? So right now if you wanted to acquire a new skills what would you do? Negotiation skills Well where would you go to acquire those skills? First I would go to the platform the learning management so the online? The LMS/ TDC the talent development center. First I would go there to see what is available and of course I will see what are for free and the time and this is how I would pick the courses and if not also if nothing is there I would check with the HR what are any other opportunities. Because they annually organize or they have a plan for HR for learning.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

First is to learn more about, to be really on the top of the expectation of my position and of course I look forward to up... to handle more responsibilities i.e. growing up and do you see yourself growing with the UNDP Yes, it happened already so you see your career going with the UNDP? So far yes, but you know growing its not as goes not only goes as we wish there's also the external factors like you know its not that I want to apply to a higher position that means that position needs to be vacant or a new position to be created. Because right now you have someone on top of you so you need that person to leave in order for you to take the place? for example or it doesn't mean that only to stick to UNDP, there are other organizations. Other organizations so would you stick with the United Nations or an NGO? Not decided.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

Just to go back it doesn't mean for someone to leave but sometimes there are restructuring or creation of units also it wouldn't mean like a vertical progression maybe it means more for me to have a horizontal progression not a higher, lateral, maybe to have experience in a different department maybe I would be interested in workflows, work structures and processes you know if I want to move in the energy and environment per say, there are other Programmed. And what kind of trainings do you need to support these goals I would really need to work on myself to know the really deep corporate stuff, the requirements to have the perspective of the audit organization is I want to deal with work processes and to advise more and improve them I need to work/ I need to know the rules and regulations so your talking about technical skills at the UNDP? Yes anything else? Maybe organizational or business chain.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent? In general talent its like a gift, something that we have special that we perform in a special way better than the others.

and every person has a talent. This is what you find in the dictionary maybe but understanding it in UNDP maybe I'm sorry I didn't dig in the subject I see the word in our/ in my e-mail but I never digged into the details of it but imagine that it means....

How has talent been defined in the UN system? As to have the tools to improve to have a very special and good performance. So you think a talent at the UN is defined as someone who has a very good performance? No, It's enabling us, giving us the talent for each of us the opportunity to sharpen our skills to do our work in a better way in a more efficient way, its not that we are not efficient also but to really take the best of us each in our field. So if I was to give you this scenario, lets say that senior management is having a meeting and your hear that/ think of someone who is talented that you would consider talented, why is that person talented is it because of their abilities, their skills, their interpersonal skills, maybe because their quality oriented maybe their efficient?

Each person would be talented in a certain field and this is where the added value would be of each of us. Ya, it can be a certain background and experience and which are the know-how to deal with the work and also looking outside the box of doing things, getting new ideas and new ways of improving. So what do you think? How do you think talent has been defined in the UN system? It's like giving the skills to the employees to go further to get the best of us.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

It's a bit philosophical no? a little ya but do you know the talent philosophy at the UNDP? No do you know where to look if you wanted to know the talent philosophy do you know who to turn to or where to turn to? Its like the objective or something like that related to the talent management. Of course I would go to the HR. so basically how we

view talent and what is one to do with the talent. Maybe I don't know I gave my own explanation/ perception but of course there is something more cooperate.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management? From my knowledge it is inclusive, because the approach the requests or the questionnaire that I mentioned earlier is sent to everybody so its not.. and the decision I think that there are criteria for the management to decide where to go depending on the different factors like budget and number of participation so it is inclusive.

4.6 Employee F

Age 27

Length of Service 5 years end of April

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

I have a French bachelorette then I went to A.U.B for a bachelor in political studies, with emphasis in international affairs.

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

When I was studying I took many small jobs just to gain experience so I can integrate the work market. I worked in Batco as administrative assistant, so I did for a long time so I was able to do a rotation. Its an engineering company but I worked mostly in HR related issues and daily management of the office. Then I worked in MTV a Lebanese TV station, it was mainly in the newsroom, but I did different rotations to gain more experience in the administrative support of the office and the company. Ok after MTV.

These were my private businesses experience then I started two-month assignment with OHCHR they needed to do reports on Yemen it was the beginning of the Arab spring it started in Yemen so a mission went there and then they came back with various CDs, and whatever information that needed to be sorted and reports needed to be drafted. And

then I joined human rights watch for three months and I worked on the Syrian crisis. Also, like research and admin work mainly and then I started my internship in UNDP. I did a six-month internship and then I joined a project. My internship was in the country office then I joined live Lebanon as a volunteer, project assistant. So that is the UNV project. Yes, UNV project assistant for around... I think it was a year and a half. Its fine as an approximate, no problem. And then a vacancy opened in LHSP and I transitioned to a service contract position. I am now an NC6. And now you are in the country office correct? Yes. Wonderful.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

It's been five years, so along the way I learned what is expected from me and what I was supposed to do. Since I am working at the program now as a program assistant position and when I started my journey in UNDP I was an intern with the program assistant, so I assisted the program assistant in reviewing the documents and everything that was sent for processing. And then when I shifted to the project I had to prepare all the documents that were to be sent to the programs so I was kind off prepared and knew what was expected of me from the internship yes so one thing led to another the internship prepared me for my position as project assistant and the project assistant prepared me again. Now I am able to see things from the projects prospective. Great was there anything else? I was honestly hand over happened and the transition was very smooth..... Everything I took on every new thing I took on was transitioned very smoothly to me, handed over to me. So you had a handover from the previous program assistant right? Yes. Ok and what role did your supervisor play in this? My supervisor moderated the thing like he put me in contact with the people I needed to talk to when I had misunderstandings or loopholes that I needed to fill so weather it was a financial

issue she directed me to the department of finance. And is there any form of assessment that takes place with your supervisor yearly or semiannually. Yes, my performance is evaluated on yearly basis prior to renewing my contract. Ok and you guys set targets goals, what do you do in this performance evaluation? Does it help you see where you have to go, where are you going. The way we do it the first part we just describe our tasks and then we get to evaluate our year.so what I usually do is to evaluate what happened and how my year went and how I can improve the things that drew me back and if I want to take more responsibilities I suggest it and everything and then my supervisor answers my requests in her part. Ok wonderful, alright that's basically it. But I work very close with my supervisor so we don't need the yearly evaluation. Incase anything need to be highlighted we talk on a day-to-day basis.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

So far, various trainings we do the security training prior to joining the organization and we like for UNDP I did a procurement test so we were trained to do a procurement test and we have all the tests we have to do. So you are talking about the mandatory test. Yes. Have you done anything else. We did various activities that were not directly linked to work procedures and rules like emotional inelegance, stress management, team building. So competency based? Yes. And did you take on any training yourself either by using the TDC, the training development center or the online platform. No, I have never done any trainings. But you know about it and you know how to use it right? Yes we are always updated by HR.

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

Do you mean in the TDC? No in general. No not really. Do you know where you can seek out information on talent management strategy and where? We can go to the HR,

be it the head of the HR or anyone in the team and I am sure they will fill us in with the information we need. it has always been honestly a very supportive unit so I think we can go for them for anything. Excellent and is there anything else you can make use of other than the HR team? The PoPP, that I had to use when I did the procurement tests everything was there.

Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?

Yes, especially given my.. if you see my history at the UNDP it was one of growth so I started as an intern then a UNV now an SC so there has always been place to learn new things and acquire new skills within the organization and this is what I hope to continue doing once tasks are like once I really know how to do some tasks I can maybe take on different tasks more tasks and move forward. Do you believe that your supervisor can maybe help you with the opportunities to gain new skills? Yes, of course, the programme is very broad we have a very big work load given the targets we set at the beginning of the year so I think that anything I can take on more responsibilities I can take on would be very helpful to the programme, my focus now is mainly on the admin and finance work of the programme but we can move forward when deemed possible to more programming issues. And when you talk about the targets set at the beginning of the year, these are the targets that who sets? The programme usually sets targets at the beginning of the year to allow the country office to set its own targets. So your part of this process? Yes part of the programme we are three people and the target is set for each member including yourself? Yes, the programme target and then dividing the tasks enabling us to reach the target.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

Working in an international organization has always been my plan honestly and my prior experiences in the private sector were just for me a tool to acquire experience that I needed to integrate the system and where I envision my current job, which is a programme assistant was something I just signed so its new to me, the tasks will not very much change but I became a country office staff which is different than being on a project and I hope to grow within my programme if possible and use the skills that I acquire along the way to grow within the organization. So you would like to stay with the UNDP right? Generally yes with an international organization but UNDP preferably of course. By international organizations do you mean other UN organizations or a multinational? No, other UN agencies.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

I have to repeat myself because when given our workload and the delivery that we set at the beginning of the year, I barely have time to do something that is not related to the financial administrative side of the programme. Under this programme there is the biggest project of UNDP that we deliver 30 million dollars a year so the work load and the pace is very fast what id like to do is more strategic and programming. But I'm not sure that our load right now allows it. So do you take advantage then of that 5% learning time that UNDP talks about? I try as much as I can. But its not necessarily working with the workload? No So you talk about strategic in programme what trainings can you think of that will give you that strategic knowledge? Are there any specific trainings you thought of that you would need? I haven't really, I want to discuss this with my supervisor who works mainly on the programming side and like draft the reports plans, projects proposals. So it's like an internal training? Yes Not really competency based? Yes so its more technical? Yes.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

Skills, its like the skill set one person has each one of us is talented in doing something. It's the set of skills we have to achieve our goals. So you said a skill set that each person has, so do you believe that everybody is a talent? Everyone is a talented I think ya, not the same way not in the same things and for the same things but I think/ I believe people aspire to become/ can become what they want using their skill sets. I surely don't have the skills set of a cook for example but a cook is a talent in what they do. So everybody has the ability inside them to be a talent? Yes, totally so that's more of an inclusive view of talent your not excluding anybody saying that someone is not talented? No, I don't/ I would never exclude someone but to each their own talent.

How has talent been defined in the UN system? So if you think about senior management example they are sitting down and there saying this person, without using names, is a talent. What do you think has lead them to believe that that person is a talent? I that day to day work and the performance evaluation of each person. We are very close in the office like everyone knows everybody and we work very closely together so we know how people work around here. So can you just elaborate a little bit more so day to day and performance? What do you mean by performance on their skills? Are they able to deliver or reach targets? For example being a programme assistant I have to work with the HR with the operations with the IT with Finance with everyone so this cycle the daily cycle work and back and forth shows how if the person is skilled or not. For example. if I do like vouchers, payments and they go to Finance and just go through its an indicator and if they all come back to me with corrections so everyone... we work very closely together. So you know that everyone's talking about it, like so they all of your work comes wrong but its not chit chatting in the hallways its

like acknowledgement. So with that your leading/talking about quality here right? Yes
so to you it's about quality is there something else? Yes, quality of the work So you
think talent at the UN system looks at quality? Yes

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy? Do you know the talent philosophy of
your organization?

No, not really. Do you know where you'd be able to find the philosophy? Yes, id go to
HR would you also use the intranet? I usually use the intranet for various questions. But
you haven't done so? Not for the talent philosophy.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

No I think it includes everyone. Like the talent management includes all the staff Why?
Is there anything else? So you haven't been seeing anybody being left out of certain
initiatives? No one is ever left out in anything, then again we are very lucky in this
office to include everyone in everything it's a very.. were more than colleagues around
the office so everyone is included in all the activities and the talent management we
are.. we spend more time in the office than we do.. for example when we do the
teambuilding activities everyone is included the security clerks, the drivers, the
assistants, the officers everyone is included up to the resident representative.

4.7 Employee G

Age: 41 years old

Length of Service: 5 years

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

I hold a BA in business Management and the major is management

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

I started working in Liban Post in 1999 as a Purchasing Supervisor and I worked until 2009 where I moved to UAE I worked at Scada Systems also as a Purchasing Supervisor and Quality Assurance and Control Officer. Then I went back to Lebanon in 2014 where I started working with UNDP. Where you started working at the UNDP and are currently holding a service contract at level 5? Yes, as a Procurement Assistant. So you have been working in the same field so Purchasing, Purchasing Quality and Procurement? Yes exactly.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

Yes, of course. What I know is that I am fulfilling what's required for me. I mean I'm conforming to the terms of reference. That's it I'm trying also to excel of course to like achieve these terms if I can. And so let's take it back to the beginning, when you first started working here, your telling me you knew what to do because of the terms of reference is there anything else that happened that allowed you to know what to work on? Did anyone do a handover with you? Did you sit with anybody? Yes, of course but actually the terms were explained to me by who? By the HR Officer, which is important of course and handover was done by a colleague also who left And did you sit with your supervisor? Of course yes. Did you guys go over the task once a year or usually do you undergo a performance appraisal? Of course, performance appraisal yes but updates for example to the terms of references themselves because sometimes you know when you are working you know with time that you like executing additional tasks which are not yet in the terms of reference. These updates were not seeing them. They are not in the ToRs? They are not in the ToRs. Are they in your performance assessment? Yes, and they are also agreed by my supervisor. So is it fair to say that the performance appraisal also works as a guide? No no, I prefer actually, when I call

something quality it has to be written you know, my terms I need to conform to them I need them to be clear.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

UNDP I received recently its called the CIPS 2, which is a certification from the chartered institute of procurement. It's a well recognized and its customized for UNDP and we were sent this year for 5 days to get this training and we thank of course UNDP for that. And any other trainings? Within UNDP no but you did do the 5 mandatory courses right? Of course Did you participate in the team building, stress management and emotional intelligence trainings? Yes, we had stress management trainings sorry I forgot Did you participate in the others? The ones that are on our system yes The TDC? So you've used the courses on TDC? Yes of course. Were you there for the team building exercise? Of course yes and emotional intelligence? Of course yes.

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

I actually heard about it but I'm not, I don't know details actually. Do you receive the e-mails form the talent center? Yes I receive them. From the UNDP global right? Of course I receive them but I actually I am very busy and of course this is.. I should have paid more attention to these alerts and to go browse the page and read them. Do you know where you can go to get this information? Yes, HR directly. And do you use the intranet or Popp? There is something called LMS its an Atlas ERP system I go there if I need anything. And your not making use of yammer either are you? No not much no. I know about it, I heard about it but I'm not using it.

Generally do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?

Yes, generally I believe so yes because I know that UNDP is an international organization I know its like very well and concrete planned and built and somewhere if I search I can reach such opportunities of course. Do you know where to search? I actually depend on the HR team when I think about this. So you ask for guidance from the HR team? Yes.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

Actually, exactly and specifically where exactly I am going to reach I don't know but I'm getting more and more into the period of procurement especially that in UNDP the procurement function is very well established and I think with time I can reach, I'm staying and reaching somewhere like I may change the country to be an international in the future, I can be a fixed term and I may be head of unit.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

These certifications of procurement with CIPS because we have CIPS level 3 and 4 within the UN system the UNDP. In addition, I can personally reach 5 and 6 in the future I mean this is in a decades time 10 years from now to finish them. So these are technical skills is there any kind of competencies/ any soft skills do you think that your would need to reach? Of course, always updates for example I do have a certification on quality improvement and I am a quality improvement associate its an accredited from American society for quality. This certification for example on each and every 5 years you have to renew it so you have to go there and this is one of them.

Any competency based (communication, leadership, management?) of course all of these, I'm not able to mention them know but I know that there are a lot of them.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

That is something acquired by default its like built in a person its an ability acquired by default? So your born with it, its built in then you discover it with time and here if you highlight it sometimes you can highlight it sometimes I think that there are a lot of talents that are not found in a person someone has to highlight and enhance them to just make them more into the professional wise I mean to enhance them. This is the personal perspective for the talent I'm not sure from a professional perspective how do we define. So is it everybody who has a talent? Of course, I think that also multiple talents may be there so in your eyes everyone is talented?

How has talent been defined in the UN system?

I cannot answer because I don't know the definition exactly on how it is defined but let me tell you an understanding just an understanding that I know that there is a learning management system and this learning management system includes a talent management system I don't know how but it exists. So lets take this scenario, when you think about senior management over here at the UNDP and think about an employee that they believe has been talented/ you have heard them say that this employee is talented, why do you think they have reached that conclusion about that employee? For example, these trainings they sent us for of course if they see me able to reach somewhere I have between brackets a talent and this field or performance I'm doing I don't know what you call it so its an appraisal from management it's a talent enhancement actually. Do you think it would be lets say someone is talented because they have a high quality of work, a high level of efficiency, because they are technical experts, or because they have good interpersonal skills, what do you think what is it? These are examples yes Do you think these are examples that the UN applies? I cannot

highlight them and where are they but I know they are existing. From the context of everything happening I understand them.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

I don't know the talent philosophy. Do you know where you can go to find it?

Somewhere in the HR unit or in the online portal system I don't know. I haven't did any research.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

It is inclusive, because the organization general communication is for everyone. They address everyone the same way because of that it's inclusive but this is a conclusion. So you do receive once a year the training assessment right? The plan HR sends you were you select what you need? Yes of course.

4.8 Employee H

Age: 34 years old

Length of Service: I've been at UNDP since 2009 almost 9 years now

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

So, I've graduated from AUB majoring in business administration with an emphasis in management and that was in 2005 then in 2013 I started my MBA at Sagesse University. So, I finished all my courses I still have to do my thesis

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

So, after graduation in 2005 I started working as HR Coordinator Virgin Mega stores I stayed there for almost 3 years then I moved to Nandos chain of restaurants I worked there for around 3 months before joining UNDP in 2009. I started as an HR

Development assistant got promoted to HR services Assistant and currently I'm the Senior HR Assistant.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

Yes of course, we have terms of reference, which is the job description for every employee. In the job description it is stated the duties and responsibilities. And of course, if there is something not clear you can always ask your manager. So mainly you use the job description. Is there anything else when you first started? Was there an employee who did a handover with you? Ya, my previous colleague she did kind of handover to me by giving me the main tasks I will be responsible of.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

The trainings, we received many trainings I can recall now we did excel training, emotional intelligence, stress management, the 7 Habits, leadership and team building. You've participated obviously in the mandatory courses, right? Yes, all employees are required to complete the mandatory courses.

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

Well the HR strategy at UNDP, mainly its HR is about people and people are the core asset at UNDP. What I know is that the value that UNDP provides through the countries and communities that it serves lies in the skills and talent and experience of our people, so people are core assets in the organization. So, you know where to go to find the talent management strategy. are you familiar with the TDC? Yes of course, it's a website online where employees' have access to many courses and they can do the courses online and get the certificates.

Generally, do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP? Actually, yes of course. Employees' can through their performance appraisal,

which is done once per year. They can state or show interest that they want to acquire additional skills to better perform their job or for career advancement. So, they sit with their manager and they show their interest. Is there something other than the performance evaluation? As you mentioned previously, the LMS.TDC website where employees they have access to more than a hundred thousand courses in different areas finance, HR, Programme. In addition, HR always shares with the staff if there is any new certificates or new courses as well as webinars that they can attend online. I just want to add one more thing, also once per year we as HR do a learning needs assessment where its like a survey we ask the employees what kind of trainings they want or need in order to perform better or for their career advancement and we do the consolidation and based on the consolidation we plan for the trainings throughout the year.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

Definitely I'm planning to continue my career in HR. Maybe in a few years I'll be an HR Manager or an HR consultant. Do you plan on continuing with the UNDP? In the short run yes, I'm not planning to move in the coming 2 years. And do you see yourself continuing with a UN agency or branching out to maybe the private sector or to different NGOS? It depends on the position actually.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

I think I would need training in leadership or management and of course I'm always interested to learn more technical skills or soft skills. I don't mind.

What do you mean by technical? Technical maybe new software or something new way to do, maybe new HRIS so if there are any maybe technically maybe in other areas in HR maybe in Procurement maybe in Finance to get the general idea so I don't mind.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

For me Talents are employees' who have high potential as well as high performance. so these are the stars of the organization if you want.

How has talent been defined in the UN system?

Talent management is actually an important element in the human resources management especially nowadays. It's a cycle that starts with the workforce planning, recruitment, onboarding and training and development so it's a cycle. Okay so let's dig little bit deeper with how it's been defined in the UN system I want you to take this scenario. Consider senior management here at the UNDP, think about them referring to someone as being talented. Someone you've heard them say this person is talented. Why do you think they believe this person is talented? First based on their performance of course and this person shows that she or he has potential to grow or to be in a different position in a higher or the senior level position maybe. Okay so has potential or that's reached its about the potential? Had potential.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

Well actually I don't know what is the talent philosophy but as I mentioned earlier that in the HR strategy, people are their core asset of the organization and that's why it's important I think for UNDP to retain and to train the talents in the organization. If you wanted to find the talent philosophy, would you know where to look? We have Popp, its an online website where there are so many policies in different areas, so we go under HR and we will find it.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

In principal and I mentioned earlier, that equal opportunities are given to all employees in terms of trainings and career developments whether through the online website,

everyone has access and can do the online courses or ask to do a certificate. However, of course there are specific trainings that are exclusive to senior level/for senior level positions or for certain employees who hold a certain type of contract, let's say fixed term appointment. Why do you think that is? There are certain trainings or certificates that are assigned by HQ, employees entitled to do them they should hold a fixed term appointment and not another contract modality. And do you know why this happens? This is the structure of UN. So, you believe it's completely structure related? Ya, exactly.

4.9 Employee I

Age: 25 years old soon to be 26

Length of Service: since 2015; 3 years almost

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

So, I graduated from USJ I have a BA in economics and then I also did my master's degree in politic economic. I graduated last year so basically that's it.

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

When I was doing my master's degree I did an internship here with SLD portfolio and also the governance portfolio. The internship was for 6 months. I then got accepted in another job at MENA capital here at Sodeco, where I was the admin assistant handling staff such as appointments, finance invoices and that's it basically. Then I applied to a UNV position at UNDP Country Office. I got accepted and basically, I was assistant to the 4 portfolios at the country office. Handling all the admin and finance issues such as checking POs, checking RDPs and processing payments for vendors and such. And now? Then I applied to the governance programme assistant also at the country office. I

started this job in November 2016, I've been handling procurement issues, admin issues, finance issues, budget issues, supporting the projects in implementing their activities, basically that's it.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

Sure, basically I think I'm expected to do my job as mentioned in the ToR and sometime maybe I should give a plus I should ask for more, I should seek new opportunities, I should learn beyond my tasks that are mentioned in my ToRs. So, in summary, I'm expected to do my job and learn more. Okay and tell me, when you first started working how did you know exactly what to do? Actually, when applying to this position I read the terms of reference, so I have an idea of what I should do in this position then I sat with my supervisor, Gaelle and Hassan, to further discuss my duties and job. So basically, it's all about my ToR and my talks with my supervisor. And was there any form of handover? Sure, when I got accepted for this position I sat with the previous Governance Assistant, Kareen, and she gave me a glimpse about duties, what is pending, what should I do so it was like a two weeks handover.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

Sure, usually at UNDP country office we always have opportunities to do additional trainings but during these 3 years I did a training in procurement. It was a procurement test, so I can create POs and vendors on Atlas and I can handle procurement stuff. I did some HR relates tests such as harassment, ethics. So, these are the mandatory courses, right? Exactly you did the 5 right? No, I didn't complete the 5 I should complete it as soon as possible honestly. Did you participate in emotional intelligence? Yes, exactly emotional intelligence and the stress management. Where you there for the team building? I don't think so

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

Not that much, I know that we have a learning center and every UNDP staff has access to it but nothing else honestly. And if you wanted to find out, do you know where to look? Sure, I could look on the intranet or portal and I can even ask the HR team here at the country office for more help.

Generally, do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP? Sure, we have some trainings that are always available that staff can ask about with the consent of the HR team, the supervisor... so yes, we always have a room for improvement and to gain more trainings. O you think there are other opportunities other than training? How else can you gain knowledge? Trainings, learn more, ask more, and seek new tasks within your team so basically that's it when I come to learning more. If you had to learn more and ask more who would you ask? I would ask honestly my supervisor. If I want to learn more I will go directly to my supervisor and ask her for more tasks.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

Now I am planning to gain more experience in this current position maybe to gain 1 or 2 additional years of experience. Then I plan to apply to another position that could be more related to my master's degree honestly, because my master's degree is all about research, so I would like to apply to a new position but not now after 2 or maybe 3 years and this new position should be related to my masters. So that I can feel like I am using it for something. So, do you plan on staying with the UNDP? If I have the opportunity to stay with the UNDP then sure, if not then I don't have an issue to change completely from UNDP. What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

Maybe training that are related to governance issues and maybe admin no I think I can cover all the admin issue. Maybe I would like to have trainings in governance issues and finance maybe more like budgeting and reporting related to donors. So more technical? Exactly, I would like to focus on the technical part not the admin. What about the competency based/soft skills? Maybe teambuilding, communication.

Teambuilding not with the country office but maybe with the project staff because I honestly don't know all the project staff, I know only 1 person from each project.

Mainly the admin and finance officer so it would be nice to have a teambuilding with all the governance project.

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

It's something you do naturally, you are good at without receiving additional trainings, and this is what I can understand from talent. Can you elaborate a little bit more? Sure, for example on talent with numbers, so I'm good at studying numbers and analyzing numbers. So, you are just good at it? It's innate? Yes, that what I understand from talent. So, you're born with it? Exactly.

How has talent been defined in the UN system?

Well, I don't know if at UNDP we can define talent. I don't know if it's really defined. I guess it's more about trainings about what you are able to do but not specifically about talent. So, they look more at your... can we consider skills as talent? Sure, why not...so let me give you this scenario, say you picture senior management in a meeting and they are saying this employee is talented. Why do you think they have reached the conclusion that this person is talented? Have you heard about something like this?

Honestly no, but if I want to say that this scenario happened, maybe because this person is very good at his job. As simple as this. What do you mean by good at their job? They

are always on time, they deliver good reports, the quality of the work is excellent...I don't know if I can say flawless but that's a simple explanation.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

I would say that honestly, UNDP maybe doesn't have a talent philosophy, it focuses more on gaining experience and training the staff more than focusing on talent. So, we can hire someone that has the skills but is not yet talented. So, in this case they will focus more on doing training. So, wouldn't you say that maybe training is the talent philosophy? Exactly if you wanted to find out the talent philosophy (if one exists) where would you look? In the HR department, I would seek the advice of the HR department and why haven't you? Maybe because I was so focused now on proving myself accomplishing all the new tasks in my new position maybe I think now it's the right time, especially that I finished my masters degree maybe now it's the time to focus on getting more trainings and getting the advice of the HR time, now I guess it would be a good time knowing that I have been in this position for 1 year and I completed my masters degree and now I am good and flexible with my time more.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

No, it is honestly, inclusive of the talent management. All the UNDP staff and the projects have access to the talent system or if you can call it training system at the UNDP so it's definitely inclusive.

4.10 Employee J

Age: 36

Length of Service: 2 years and a half

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?

I have a BS degree bachelor's degree business emphasis Management Information Systems and now I'm enrolled in a master's degree program at the National Security and Risk Management.

2. Would you please walk me through your work experience?

Well I started in 2007 I started as a SIOC Operator at the Department of Safety UNDSS. Later I move to UNRWA first as a Operations Officer and later as a Security and Safety Officer where I spent in UNURWA almost 5 years before moving to UNHCR as a Field Safety Assistant. Okay so UNHCR and then later you moved to WFP? Yes, WFP also as a Security Assistant and finally I moved to the UNDP to assume the role of a Country Office Senior Security Assistant.

3. Do you have a clear understanding of what is expected from you at work?

Yes, definitely. First because of my in depth, if you want, career experience where I have assumed similar roles from 2007-2018. So basically I have been working in the same industry for almost 11 years and although it differs from one mandate to another throughout the experience the role of a Security Advisor or a Security Assistant or despite the variety of titles the terms of reference is strictly defined within the UN system and usually because we are assuming these duties, I have been working for almost 11 years I have a clear understanding. The difference is also the type of trainings we get, especially two types of trainings; the local security system provided by DSS and this is a to introduce us to the roles and responsibilities for a security assistant and later when we get the SCP course, which is also for security professionals. So, this is also where we get in the depth trainings on the roles and responsibilities in addition to managerial competencies to oversee such positions. Okay and is there anything else other than the courses? Other than the courses, the job description or the ToRs are also

clearly defined. This is where we have a list of tasks it has to be completed and usually we have also the performance evaluation at the end of the year we will be also evaluated basically on the accomplishments of these specified tasks. While assuming the role at UNDP, I received a detailed brief from the deputy regional security advisor who provided me also with a clearer understanding of what is anticipated from this position upon recruitment. So, besides the generic ToRs, what are the expectations and also an overview has been provided about the mandate of UNDP, which is obviously a very vast mandate compared to other UN agencies.

4. Can you outline the training you have received at UNDP?

At UNDP I received the, if we are talking about specific to security, I received the Hostage Incident Management training and SCP the security certificate for professional. Anything else? We got also the are mandatory courses the 5 of them, right? Yes, did you participate in the team building exercise? We received a training that was provided by the country office on leadership did you do the 7 habits? Yes What about emotional intelligence? Yes and did you do teambuilding? Yes anything else? This is at UNDP level. Since you've been working at other agencies are there other trainings you've done at the other agencies? I've received investigations management. I also received a ToT training, this is how we deliver trainings so how to prepare and deliver trainings. I also received the ETB (emergency trauma back training). I received also a crash course on analysis. How to conduct/ what is the analysis cycle in security management. That's all.

Are you aware of the current HRM strategy and talent management at UNDP?

HRM strategy I'm not fully aware of it but the talent management yes, we receive e-mails about training availably and so on. And if you wanted to find out the HRM strategy where would you go? UNDP portal, intranet. '

Generally, do you believe that there are the opportunities to gain additional skills in UNDP?

Yes indeed, you're talking about additional skills? Yes UNDP, as I mentioned, is an agency with a vast mandate and usually and especially, in the field of security they are open to other suggestions so whenever we request a type of training or something that we identify this is an investment so that we can assist others, they are open to these suggestions and yes, they promote it. so yes, there is opportunity to gain skills and this is not only related to my position and we also suggest trainings to staff members to increase their safety and security. Until now for the past 2 years and a half, any training we proposed to the management they were able to satisfy those needs.

5. Can you outline what your career plan is?

Basically, I am on a contract that is supposed to end in 3 years renewable. During this there was a set of accomplishments that needs to be reached and we are almost there. However, we have also future plans first these plans need to be inline with the SDGs however also its more dedicated to increase staff awareness and capacity, to build on the capacity of the staff members to respond to emergencies, crisis and so on. We will be working with the regional office to implement. For me as personal, I will be working on finalizing my master's degree. Once my master's degree is finalized, I will be able to apply for international positions, which will also be a growth in my career. So, do you plan on staying with the UNDP? Yes.

What additional training will be needed to support career aims?

Now because I have finalized the SCP training, I can apply for international position, but I still need my master's degree. However, there is also more trainings to be invested

in international staff. Mainly the second step will be the intermediary security advisor training. Anything else? No

6. What do you understand by the terms talent?

Talent for me is the competencies that staff members need to acquire and basically varies between technical skills and other personal skills so for example, communications, teamwork, other technical skills... all of these will be put into a talent. Okay so you put these skills into a talent or the talent possesses these skills? The talent should possess a variety of skills. And do you think people are born talents or you can develop talent? No, I believe you can develop.

How has talent been defined in the UN system?

Basically, between academic and competencies and experience. If I was to give you a scenario, think about senior management here at the UNDP in a meeting talking about an employee who is talented. Why do you think they have made the assumption that this employee is talented? I think maybe they will be pointing out about certain skill/skills that he was able to prove (not extraordinary) that he is very professional in adopting these skills and he put it into the right direction where UNDP can make use of it.

7. What is your organization's talent philosophy?

Honestly, no. would you know where to look if you wanted to find out? Definitely, the UNDP website and intranet. Have you been receiving e-mails from the TDC? Yes, and do you look into those e-mails? Yes, definitely I wait for whenever I find a training that suits my needs to get enrolled in. Do you feel like you are able to take advantage of the 5% learning time? No why? No time.

8. Is your organization inclusive or exclusive in terms of talent management?

I believe it is inclusive, everybody is included in this talent.

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