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# Human Resource & Knowledge Management: Best Practices Identification and Assessment in High Performance Organisations in Uruguay

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## Structured Abstract

**Purpose** – The following investigation attempts to identify, describe and analyse the conditions and practices that, as regard to Human Resources Management (HR) and Knowledge Management (KM), take place in the organisations that have received the National Quality Award (PNC in Spanish) in Uruguay in the past 10 years. Its aim is to disseminate those "best practices" that may have contributed to achieving this Award, among other organisations. This study use a qualitative research methodology, based on the analysis of the "extensive reports" presented by the organisations and previously evaluated by the judges of the Award. The main findings are: the identification of unusual practices, and especially, the way in which they are mutually articulated and integrated. Finally, there is an emphasis on the way these organisations deal with certain classic dilemmas of Human Resources Management and Knowledge Management respectively.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The research adopts a qualitative methodology analysis of the cases, based on the reading of the Extensive Reports presented by the award-aspiring businesses. This "lengthy account" put forward following the areas proposed by the Continuous Improvement Model. The investigation has chosen to take 10 organisations for its analysis. In order to select the Human Resources and Organisational Knowledge Management practices described and analysed, the following criteria were defined: reiterated practices used by companies, probably infrequent in the general population [high intra-population frequency]. Unique and original practices, valued as

outstanding [low extra-populational frequency or originality]. Coordination or articulation between practices. Practices referred to solving classic management dilemmas. In this way, over 500 practices or management conditions were processed, using 10 dimensions and 46 sub-dimensions. The topic of solving dilemmas has been presented in this investigation using an illustrative square called a “Dilemmometer”. This is a chart that shows the involved axes and how the organisations solve them.

**Originality/value** – For the first time researches access to the PNC original winner companies information, and try to spread best practices out the market. The way of representing dilemmas of HR and KM can be considered original.

**Practical implications** – Knowing good practices would be very useful, as well as the description of how they are carried out, and the articulation amongst them, for others companies that want to compare their practices in the light of high-performance organisations. Likewise, this investigation could give rise to further instances of research that may try to describe the way in which decisions are made to carry out these practices, as well as the configuration of training programs based on the best practices as a way to disseminate the best company practices.

**Keywords:** Knowledge Management, Human Resources Management, National Quality Award, Uruguay.

**Paper type** – Practical Paper

## 1. Introduction

The framework of this investigation is the Agreement between National Quality Institute of Uruguay (INACAL) and the Catholic University of Uruguay (UCU) as a Academic Cooperation about High Performance Organisations Management. The aim is to identify and measure best management practices in those organisations who have obtained the National Quality Award (PNC).

Uruguayan market is relative small compared with its neighbours. For this reason, Uruguayan companies can't compete looking for scale production and must pursue qualitative advantage [especially in HR management]. The PNC is one of the strategic national incentives in this perspective. In order to collaborate with the purpose of the PNC this paper should be consider as a first action to divulge the best local practices.

Some awareness could be mentioned, in order to place these best practices away from any “ideal world”. Considering that these practices should work properly in the industry they are, but no merely they can good enough for other companies in different industries. Moreover, there are no companies in this research that implement all the good practices at the same time. In fact, each company emphasised in such a few practices and their almost unique way to articulate and combine them.

Researchers adopt the Carla O'Dell (1998) definition of Best Practices as they can "label" practices in a specific and unique place an time. The term "best" should be used also to those practices considered "better" or "exemplary".

This practice need to be adopted carefully. The procedure should be taken as a organ transplant more than a vegetable relocate. The features of the practices as well as the characteristics of the "recipient" have to be considered. The type of the knowledge to be replicated –explicit or tacit-, the type of organisation culture in use, non trivial motivation and the existence of some evaluation and measure procedures would help in a best practice systematic transfer.

At last but not least, should be considered to interpret the results of this research, its original source of information: the extensive reports presented by the organisations had elaborated for PNC presentation, following the structure of the model. Probably there are a lot of others HR and KM practices that organisation perform but not been mentioned.

## **2. Findings**

The general features and specific practices in HR and KM of the organisation analysed were classified in three categories: (1) General organisation features, conditions and abilities in HR and KM; (2) HR specific practices or techniques; (3) KM specific practices or techniques.

### ***2.1 General organisation features, conditions and abilities in HR and KM***

#### *2.1.1 Inclusive conception about people*

From the beginnings, there is in the majority amount of the studied organisations a clear conception of themselves that include all the personnel as part of it. The evidence is found in the declaration of mission, vision, values and the strategy plan. In all of it, people are mentioned as a main and explicit part, as can be seen in these examples, (source: Extensive Reports):

- People are considered the most important resource.
- People are the column that supports success.
- What is important is the welfare of coworkers and their family.
- The intention to make new and qualified work-force is stated.

People also can be found at the organisation strategy design:

- The HR Manager participates in the design of the strategy plan.
- At finally definitions of the Strategy Plan they make meetings with coworkers.
- Results from personnel survey are picked up and include in the strategy definition. Moreover, the development of the personnel is included as a principal target.

In addition to this, plenty of values related with Quality are described in terms of development of the personnel. This exceeds more than a simple client-satisfaction or requirement compliance.

This unique characteristic (people as the main part of the company), is confirmed in the fact of none specific mentions in HR has been given by PNC. It can be deducted that it is impossible to obtain a high score in HR management without gain the PNC. In order words, to obtain the PNC it is prior to have a high score in HR management section of the PNC.

#### *2.1.2 Systematic accumulation of Knowledge*

Can be stated that improvement procedures are the result of a systematic accumulation of a multiple, diverse and permanent experiences, projected in the long term. HR and KM, in particularly, are far away from current circumstances, and need continuous work for years (3 to 15), involving more than one generation of coworkers.

#### *2.1.3 Evaluation Culture*

We identify a culture of evaluation in terms of systematic internal and internal evaluations. This practice follows diverse aims as: certifications, recognitions and decision making.

A culture of evaluation, in terms of systematic external and internal evaluations can be found in these organisations. These practices follow diverse aims as: certifications, recognitions and decision making.

Four typologies compound this culture:

- **Certifications and recognitions:** norms in term of management, security and health workplaces as ISO-9000 & 14000, Great Place to work; in terms of social responsibility and similar as participation Endeavour Foundation and Exports Awards.

- **Systematic evaluations:** mostly made by external consultants in terms of organisation climate, salary national contest market share and position in-to-the-market.
- Use of **Balanced Scorecard** that includes Knowledge Management Key Performance **Indicators** (KPI) and evaluation systems for decision making, with a learning approach.
- **Reflexivity competence:** The concept of “reflexivity” refers to circular relationships between cause and effect, specially an act of self-reference between reflexion and action. Three levels of self-observation have been found, namely: self-control of their own actions, accountability to others and to establish new norms and rules over practices.

#### *2.1.4 Desire of Leadership*

The organisations studied show a clear vocation of leadership in their field of influence. This happens, basically, through the desire of pioneer as well as the active and permanent aim to be a reference in their area. For example: to be the first certified ISO-9000 company in its sector, or to be the first company to create a HR department in an industry.

#### *2.1.5 Dynamic Structure Organisation*

Even if there is not a unique organisation structure design in the organisations studied, it should be mentioned the presence of a common way to organize divisions. Organisation charts with not too much hierarchic levels can be identified. Moreover the structure tends to be flattened. Some organisations are designed in a way of production cellular teams and quality circles.

In one hand, these organisations has the capability of create institutional infrastructure recruiting people from social-work professional field, and the creation of quality positions into HR and KM systems.

In the other hand, they have the capability to destroy (in a constructive way of thinking) some institutional infrastructure, as could be middle management, or modifying its traditional role.

### *2.1.6 High level technology background*

Availability of High Technology support is a clear concern for these organisations by a constantly searching for the best technological tools available in the market. Moreover, they are in a continuous updating process according with the IT infrastructure lifespan.

These practices have a direct impact in personnel competences by permanent education and updating IT every day work routines.

### *2.1.7 Personnel autonomy*

Diverse levels of autonomy are described, related with supervision necessarily and decision-making decentralization. As well, both are related with predisposition to some practices, for example:

- self control in the job area
- decision-making in the first line contact with clients
- self-made agenda and organisation of duties according with goals fulfilment
- delegation of responsibility
- Use of each own personnel criticism within general framework of company rules.

It is remarkable the responsibility of people in their own temporary substitution: in some organisations each person has the obligation to prepare who is capable to do his work during the absence, with an obvious impact in organisational KM.

### *2.1.8 Active Participation*

An active and intense participation of personnel is remarkable in this kind of organisations. Meetings are part of everyday work.

Sharing, mention, analyze (results, expectations and needs), discuss, suggest and proposed, are some of the verbs used to describe activity at work.

Procedure changes are usually made after personnel consultation and opinion. As well, every improvement action suggested by them, are treated and then communicated the decision about to do it or not. In some cases, the ones implemented are rewarded.

Consequent with the “evaluation culture” already mentioned, active participation is measured throughout: the amount of active work-teams, number or people in work-teams, the frequency of meetings and personnel participation into it and the level of knowledge in various activities.

### 2.1.9 Trust Management

One of the most elusive elements of intangible capital in organisations is the trust among people. It is known that confidence is essential to HR and KM. First of all, confidence has to flow top-down, because its slowly and complicated rising and at the same time, its rapidly destruction. These evidence how fragile it is, and subsequently the high cost to recover it.

In these organisations, it appears a continuously effort to construct trust and confidence and a clear behalf to find it by facts. Some examples could be mentioned:

- **Accessibility:**
  - free use of internet;
  - every co-worker has the company door keys, so personnel can enter and leave anytime
  - Self-service from all working supplies in stock.
- **Decision-Making:**
  - Any co-worker can stop production line if he/she consider there is potential risk of accident.
  - Authority delegation: direct activity from middle-managers in the operations and administrations matters.
  - An instructor can continue in a training course if he/she thinks that the goal/s is not obtained.
  - Promotion of volunteering in each area personnel should consider better.
- **Responsibility for own activities:**
  - self-appraisal performance
  - no absenteeism control
  - bosses are responsible to control the objectives achievement
  - holidays to study or to be in mourning without a limit of time by the organisation (auto-assignment)
- **Assessment of its own people:** Taking ISO certification work without external consultant and only with own personnel.
- **Transparency:**
  - Everybody knows economics annual results and everyone salary.
  - When someone in the company received a tip, he/she has to reject; in case the client insists, he/she has to accept and deliver it to administration officer and the company should do a compliment to the

client and return the tip at the same time making recognition to the employee for his honest action according with policy terms of the company. This case is a clear tangible system to make and deliver mutual confidence.

## ***2.2 Specific practices or techniques used in HR***

### *2.2.1 Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation*

Studied Organisations shows a fine balance between extrinsic motivation [external stimuli], and intrinsic motivation, (only willing to do it).

In the first set, extrinsic motivation, some clearly types of incentives are described: prizes for achievement and punctual goals (productivity, sales, etc.). Others incentive for example, contests between co-workers that can win old-fashion equipment, leisure activities and important celebrations for people (parties, birthdays, new business and goal achieved).

In the second set, intrinsic motivation, organisation are looking forward from various practice:

- direct and verbal recognition
- writing a congratulation in the corporate magazine
- formal recognition of coworkers after secret election between them
- giving the chance to be instructor or the possibility to achieve personal goals
- participation in dynamics groups with a professional leader
- consenting doing things in a innovation way
- the use of “treasures” as prizes (original pieces made it with this aim)

The management of extrinsic motivation has the characteristic to be personalized to each person. This can considered as a intermediate way between purely extrinsic willing of the organisation objectives and the knowledge of the factors that promote the own motivation of people.

For the purpose of personalize the attention with each employee, supervisors are free to adapt different types of incentives to different needs and ways of motivations (different people are motivated from different incentives: money, vouchers, travels, training

opportunities, holidays, etc.). Also, they use different reasons or causes that justified the application of specific prize (contribution, achievement, attitude, gesture).

The results of the application of this motivation and incentives system, are measured permanently by a internal survey about climate at work and people satisfaction with their jobs. Some tools could be mentioned that demonstrated the diversity of appliance: from biannual climate-at-work survey to every day satisfaction at work poll (Ex: daily, personnel could access into the ERP system to a poll to say how is he/she today: happy face or not to happy face). Some other KPIs are being used, for example: volunteer rotation and people willing to give their contribution at work.

### *2.2.2 Combination between internal and external recruiting*

These organisations prefer internal recruiting. They use it as a way of preserve valuable people and also to motivate them to develop their professional career in the company.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, this practice is combined with the recruit of young people (students with potential) with the aim of incorporate new competences or to process some necessary changes.

Both strategies are segregated, it means, they are not used for the same position recruited to avoid personnel frustrations

The main goal of this practice is to obtain a low rotation and a high retention of personnel.

### *2.2.3 Health, Security and Welfare*

As well as these organisations have the Health and Security certification, they developed high standards over legal requirements and adopted before them turns to be legal.

In Addition, there is a permanent promotion of security culture and, what could be named, as a worry about personnel comfort that includes physic and emotional health and the prevalence of psychological health: ergonomic designs, sport programs & leisure time.

Companies pay also attention to the balance between work-life and familiar-life:

- help programs to personnel and family in trouble times
- workshops about family/work life
- limiting of extra time at work
- chat system to communicated with children, at work

- health family expenses reimbursement
- help to personnel sons' education
- presents and contests to children
- help with housing accommodation.

Finally, it is important to mention the relevance of work place to promote formal and informal participation as well as the concern for comfortable work places and the right use of recreation places. In some organisation exists intelligent control building systems.

#### *2.2.4 Performance appraisal*

One of the most important columns of quality manager and the culture of evaluation for these organisations are recognized is the performance appraisal.

Considering as a sub-system of HR & KM, it has a direct connection with the core business, the service standard compliance and a sense of self-evaluation habit. Some of the aspects included in the evaluation are: the level of forecast potential development of people, the achievement of personal and organisational goals, the knowledge about products and the respect for client's time.

Several methods of performance assessment concentrate a multiplicity point of view: the evaluated person, their pairs, supervisors and subordinates, as well as internal and external client opinion.

Managers, at the same time, are evaluated not only for technical competences but leader's competences. They use anonymous volunteer surveys about how he manage personnel, who elaborate reports including strength and weak aspects founded.

#### *2.2.5 Labour relationships*

As we mentioned at Health, Security and Welfare practice, these organisations adopt over-legal requirements policies by anticipating the norm or by requirement compliance. Some studied organisations have not union labour. Where there is it, labour relations have some characteristics that could be mentioned:

- labour union demands are considered as opportunities to improve by the organisation
- There is a high frequency of formal and informal meetings (twice a month), between corporate and union, in both headquarters.
- the union labour participates in a few committees (specially in health, security and social responsibility)

- Quality values are included in Labour Relationships frameworks agreements between parts are considered in a long term by both.

#### *2.2.6 Salary and Benefits*

Salaries have variable components depending on business results or on achieved competence. Mechanism of compensation cover from bonus to benefits, for example: product discounts, insurance over the agreement, free vehicles insurance, free funeral services, additional Christmas bonus, extra holidays, training or economic helping in particularly cases.

### **2.3 Specific practices or techniques used in Knowledge Management (KM)**

#### *2.3.1 Important Information and Communication Management*

The group of organisation studied share a clear and detailed internal communication matrix (ways, frequencies, senders, receivers and responsible).

Multiples channels are using in this organisations: face-to-face, visits, web, telecommunications, writer reports, posters, publications, e-mails, open and confidential channels, internal “call-centre, mobile telephone for personnel, etc.

Other practices as high frequency of multiple, constant and various meetings are considered as a part of the work and not as a isolated and extraordinary activities. They are appreciated as an investment of time (and investment of time to gain time). The aim of these meetings could be: to inform and analyze trends and goals, strategy discussion, policies updates, communicates client surveys, etc.

The universal access to information, sometimes mentioned as “information democratization”, as well is used to confidence making, has the purpose that each area of the company could be in a result-oriented way. Usually, they took meeting reports and who participates of it take the responsibility to disperse the information and agreements obtained, to the rest of the personnel.

Some attitudes are shown: hearing more than speaking, multiples informal meetings, received the information from its source and on demand meetings.

In some cases, there are everyday meetings for discuss and create strategic plans or meetings where family is integrated.

### *2.3.2 Training and development of personnel practices*

The growth and development of people in these organisations is an end in itself: development purposes are aligned with organisational objectives and there is an annual training plan for each employee.

The education and training of personnel is sponsored. For those who are studying for undergraduate or graduated obtained holidays to study. Other way to promote it is to give the opportunity to take profit from what they learned at work for improve their employment or satisfied other personal needs.

Sources for detect training needs are significant, besides if they are latent or manifest. For example:

- Competences needs to be improved aligned with strategy plan.
- Not compliance detected in auditing process if they are identified as a lack of training.
- Learning opportunities as a result from external and internal audits process.
- Recommendations from performance assessment process. Analyze the profiles positions if they are considered as a evidence of qualifications requirements.
- Special programmes coordinated by a Psychologist, where needs of training are detected or at least get aware about it.

They hold a great investment in training. Different KPI shows the evidence of the effort that they made. In terms of percent from profit: 12% to 18% of profits. Others measure in terms of percent from sales: 2% to 4%; or in terms of percent from salaries: 1,5 %. Others show that they covered the 75 to 100 % of personnel. Finally there is a few that measures in terms of annual hours of training per employee: 14 to 30 hours / employee / year.

But this KPI are not considered to measure the effectiveness. The evaluation of training process is considered a important part of itself. The estimation of its effectiveness is calculated in several different ways:

- Surveys that can measure the student satisfaction with the trainee activity
- Knowledge incorporated evaluations
- Supervisor reports informing the performance of employee post-training. In other words, the truly effective transfer to the workplace.
- The verification of the leverage of no compliance in training needs.
- Use evaluations defer on time to measure the sustainability of knowledge

- Determination if the training process made a significant change in employee and in the relationship with external client.

From the analyze of this evaluation would emerge the considerations to invest new resource in training process.

The permanent updating is a central need in the training strategy. The use of advanced technology impacts in the personnel qualification and demands the constant updating of competences.

In this way, as a examples of efforts made to being updated should be: congress participation, presence in international and national exhibitions and conference (exchanging the learning with others after come back), or the invitation to foreign teachers.

The training should be complemented with the reading of selected books, an article debate and the exchange experiences with other organisations.

### *2.3.3 Management of and by competences*

Many of organisations studied have adopted partially or completely a competences management approach.

For this reason, they used tools to identify and describe competences, evaluation of competence performance, competence maintenance, use of route maps to label require competences and the use of evidence or portfolio for its recognition.

In any case, there are gap competences reports required for a position and those that people have. As well as competences manual where they identified those needs to access it.

The scope goes far away from technical or key “foundational” competences boundaries, reaching the explicit search of some transversal competences. For example:

- Team work (by reinforce of the identity, team performance evaluation, the use of group incentives and the existence of their own e-mail address.
- Achieve management: promoting the victory from difficult and the gain of a result orientation vision.
- Anticipation and problem resolutions.

The emphasis is focus on certification of people in different disciplines in a technical as a management point of view.

#### 2.3.4 "Transitional" practices towards intangible systemic management

Can be estimated that, in these organisations, conditions created or promoted to a Quality Management or the use of Total Quality models are those that allow them to move towards a systematic Knowledge Management.

Companies are starting to generate "spontaneous" practices that rely on their experience in improving management and move towards intangible management practices, often without labelling them as such.

For example, some "traditional" training courses are complemented with the circulation of knowledge within the organisation by training in a "cascade" mode, or drawing up a "Knowledge Management Handbook."

In the same vein, identify leaders who can convey knowledge and built through training, during work or by their daily example. While this practice is adopted mainly to save costs, this is an emerging tool for organisational KM.

Personnel, who do a course outside the company, transmitted by internal training [if the evaluation is positive] or prepare reports and implements changes that show evidence. It also uses the transfer of best practices among organisations in different nations, if any country needs support to a program; it provides the knowledge needed by another who has gone through that experience. Strategies are used for mutual support, each person or area has support personnel who knows the job and can exercise at any time in case of failure of the head of the process.

Also, meetings are held to exchange experiences with new and old officials and people looking to find the real possibility of bringing their knowledge.

There are standardized systems that allow you to receive, send, derive and answer questions and promote the existence of communities of practice, circles, and in general meetings to discuss cases and queries.

One of the goals of the emerging organisational KM is to achieve the objective of being poly-functionality. To do this, setting up systems of job rotation as a pre-established plan, where, after each rotation, the person makes suggestions. Poly-functionality arrays are designed, where most of the personnel are trained to perform other everyday jobs besides their own. The matrix includes training prior to admission, received for their work and provided for poly-functionality. There are also systems for which any employee can share their work during a day with colleagues from other areas.

The results to be obtained by poly-functional are explicit form:

- Learn permanently various tasks [enrichment].

- To understand the operation of the business from various locations [see the company as a whole].
- Be motivated with the new challenges [avoid monotony].
- Contribute and suggest ideas.
- Have replacements
- Promote internal recruitment, personal development and career building.
- Achieve a high internal rotation and a low external one.

### *2.3.5 Organisation Learning Practices*

Another competence required by these companies is to learn from successes and failures [error handling]. This includes the effective ability to recognize mistakes, learn from them and seek a rapid solution.

From this slogan, with the error, the economic benefit provided for in the transaction moves into the background, education, obtaining in exchange for [pay to learn.]

Faced with an error, they usually trigger a series of practices, namely:

- Analysis of the assumptions underlying the non-compliance
- Redefining deadlines or goals
- Reallocation of resources and priorities
- Creation of activity that helps to overcome
- Monitoring satisfaction within

Systems are also improving the service of organisational learning, whether through permanent or benchmarking conducted multiple presentations to the PNC as a way of learning.

The organisations surveyed, would enhance collective learning systems simple learning processes pass through double and triple loop. These mechanisms are characterized by the analysis of the causes "root" of problems, consideration of alternative solutions, the study of costs, risks and time associated with each option, settling for the alternative to follow, the allocation of responsibility and deadlines, and execution monitoring (double loop learning).

For his part, welcomed processes and induction of stress people avoid mistakes against problems already solved sometime in the past, trying to bring organisational learning to the second loop referred to (cause analysis of events in the prevention). The existence of practices to develop the same ability to learn [eg: to achieve the ability

to anticipate the results of a project based on predictive models of the history of previous projects] are learning actions of third circuit. Another example of this type of learning is the existence of special teams to deepen and adapting knowledge from different systems and processes.

### *2.3.6 Key role of teach attitudes in the workplace*

Beyond KM strategies in general, or training in particular, seems to apply in many of these organisations the principle that there is no better way to learn than trying to teach. This role of "educational management" is integrated into the activity is part of the job and is expressed in several ways:

- The organisation has a training activity to third parties.
- Some of the members of the organisation is teaching roles outside the organisation or do consulting work.
- The company's main university teaching
- Outreach activities are conducted in schools or other organisations
- Any member of personnel working with the thesis of an employee
- In the form of coaching [for example, establishing the position of "mentor" in each induction, the manager spends 25% of their time to it, or even every member of the organisation fulfils that role against other ].
- Lead by example
- Maintain activities or promotion of values or concepts [quality] in the business environment.
- Assist directly, providing "know how" to other organisations, or through the formation of customers or suppliers.

### *2.3.7 Innovation Management*

Innovation is a generalized value in these organisations, though not systematized management. The main source of innovation is the set of ideas from employees. People are supported and, if the idea has promise, are assigned a sponsor to support the process.

There are also panels that discussed the need to incorporate new technology. In some cases, are carried out, research activities in the service of innovation. Other practices identified in this area are:

- Divest businesses that do not contribute to innovation.
- Include in the evaluation of individual performance capacity for innovation.

- Encouraging innovation through problem-solving groups and contributions of ideas.

#### ***2.4 Joint practices and resolving dilemmas***

Joint practices concerns the way these companies integrate and articulate their practice, rather than (or in addition to) use innovative techniques. The second refers to how they manage, these enterprises, some intractable situations or dilemmas in which they are involved.

With regard to the articulation of practices should be stated that in many cases, these practices are known (Performance Assessment, Training Plan, etc.) but carried out with a different concept. The question seems to be more on how to do things than what things are done. The difference in how things are done is given by the coordination or integration of practices.

One way of integration seems to be the existence of policies and actions "mirror" external client / internal. For example: social responsibility articulates with the interests about people, or performance evaluation includes KM competences.

In managing "mirror" what is done "outside" is "introverted" the organisation, or what is practiced inside the company, is "projected" in the industry [for example: social responsibility begins at home": training the person contributes to their employability, beyond the current needs of the company, or conceive that the employee is a transmitter of the values of the organisation in the environment.

Customer relationship management internal / external client management is another example of joint practices:

- Search for personnel to improve customer relationship and at the same time, customers who, by their demand, improve the personnel.
- Customers who have the possibility to develop high occupancy are preferred than others.
- The virtues of personnel are used as selling value propositions.
- It seeks diversity among employees [origin, age, sex]: this improves the diversity of clients and the ability to understand their needs.

It has represented the theme of the resolution of dilemmas in this research through an illustrative table that referred to as "Dilemmometer." This is a chart which displays the axes involved and how these organisations are solved.

In the "Dilemmometer" identified ten (10) dilemmas that companies typically face in HR and KM, describing how they treat by the organisations studied.

<b>Dilemmas regarding characteristics, competences and conditions</b>		
1	Emphasis on task	Emphasis on people
2	Centralisation	Autonomy
3	Work life	Personal life
4	Formal relation	Informal relation
<b>Dilemmas in People Management</b>		
5	External recruiting	Internal recruiting
6	Extrinsic motivation	Intrinsic motivation
7	Centralised People Management	Decentralised People Management
<b>Alternatives in terms of Knowledge Management</b>		
8	Individual training	Collective Knowledge Management
9	Specialization	Polyfunctionality
10	Adoption/imitation	Innovation

For example, it is the typical dilemma of training policies versus emphasis on tasks. Emphasis on people practices have been identified in one way or another, which allows seen in the degree of tension and the type of solution found.

### 3. Conclusions

Base on the findings shown above, we can conclude:

1. The studied organisations, deserving of acknowledgement for their excellent quality management in general terms, have also some particularities in human resources and knowledge management.
2. These distinctive features are nor improvised neither current situation dependent, but stem from a constantly and sustained effort, accumulative, base on the aim of leader the market in each economic sector where the company performs, a continuous assessment culture and the people consideration as a key part of the organisation.
3. Their management is possible thanks to a dynamic organisational structure, with the capacity of build and destroy institutional infrastructure, an advanced technological background, the acknowledgement of a significant people autonomy at work and the own people participation.
4. Personnel contribution is supported by a deep trust development, manifested in the easy resources accessibility, decision power, self responsibility and management transparency.
5. Human resources management aims to achieve that facts at the operative level be consistent with the mission declaration. Here stands out the safety and

welfare policies that exceed legal requisites, the use of not only significant incentives [salary and benefits], but intrinsic motivation, and the careful and equilibrated utilisation of internal and external recruitment.

6. Probably, the more remarkable management in these kind of organisations is the knowledge one: specific internal communication practices, training strategies [specially its permanent appraisal], management by competencies, and the existence of “transitional” practices to a knowledge management [strictly speaking].
7. We can claim that these companies have some of the distinctive issues of the learning organisations: the systematic learning-for-mistakes management and the “docent attitude” at work in all labour levels.
8. Innovation is a spread value within these organisations, but no systematized.
9. The investigated companies use new management techniques, but also get its advantages from the practices integration and articulation. A lot of times, the companies used the same practices than others companies, but with originals conceptions, it means, the difference is in the “how” to management more than “what” specific techniques are used.
10. Research shows that these organisations have its own way of resolve classics management “dilemmas”. Specially, these companies had resolve with equilibrate criteria the tension between centralisation / decentralisation at HR management, function development / human development, Family life / work life, and individual training / collective knowledge management, and other disjunctives.

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