

# Professional Career Guidance & Counseling in Companies –

Drivers and opportunities connecting HRD and CGC  
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## Overview

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\*CGC – Career Guidance Counselling



# Introduction – our perspective

- Personnel development or Human Resource Development (HRD) is one field in which Career Guidance and Counseling (CGC) should play an important role today
- HRD must be understood in close interconnection with the operational organization of work and its change
- CGC need to understand HRD and HRD should know about advantages of professional CGC
- We aim to connect both fields of professional work by better mutual understanding, stimulating exchange and professional training
- The following reflections are the background of our project



## Part 1 - The HRD field in transformation

We should recognize that HRM and HRD will adjust to new challenges and change in culture, structure and tasks



# Employees under pressure

## personal responsibility of individuals

- ‚normal‘ perception of being adult
- differentiated access to support
- conflicting position in western societies

## dependent employment

- most relevant form to earning a living
- ‚shared‘ responsibilities of employer and employee
- liberalized contracts for many

## pressure and freedom in companies

- High expectations and pressure on employees
- More freedom for individual development
- Uneven chances for different groups

## technological change and adaptation

- technology and organizational processes ‚ruling‘
- social or developmental aspects are secondary
- Individual need to adapt

# HR under pressure

## ▲ technologization, digitalization need for qualified workforce

- Companies feel the pressure to bind employees
- Qualification, up- and reskilling is needed on all levels

## ▲ organizational change - agility, transformation, technologization - rapid change in products and markets

- Companies are changing fundamentally
- Even in smaller companies and “traditional” branches transformation is speeding up

# HR under pressure

## ▲ Demography,

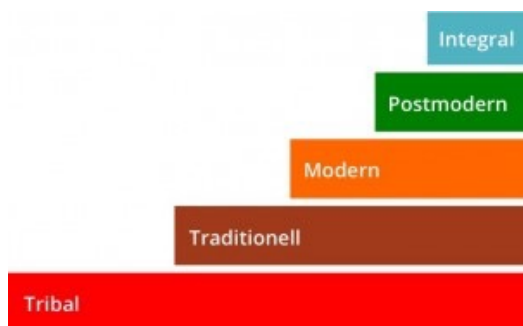
- An aging society with less young people and older employees
- Growing issues of health and adaptation in workforce

## ▲ Individual claims

- Individuals claim for a better balance between work and life
- Younger generations question the current system with better negotiation power
- Companies react (e.g. employer brand)



## What is the next move in the organization?



- 5. Integral, evolutionary organization: Just emerging, looking for new and better ways how people can work together (living organism within a complex environment)
- 4. Postmodern: Still in hierarchy but open to alternative values and cultural diversity. Empowerment and stakeholder involvement play an important role
- 3. Modern: Competition, profit, permanent pressure for "innovation", controlling, administration, hierarchy (modern, rational company)
- 2. Traditional: Authoritarian organization, formalized roles, hierarchy (e.g. Military, Church, Trades)
- 1. Tribal: Power over subordinates. Fear keeps the organization together (e.g. Clan, Mafia)



(Source: Frederic Laloux 2015 – "re-inventing organizations")

# HR is evolving

- ▲ ■ HR is facing a transformation itself
  - Shift to more strategic, less administrative and more individual oriented HR model
  - Classical HR approaches consist mostly from rational, technocratic and administrative approaches and measures
  - Move toward a more loosely, decentralized, self-organized organization ... and HR
  - New roles for HR specialists, line-managers, consultants, supervisors



## Part 2 – Counselling as a strategic position in HRD

The assumptions from the 90s about individualized career without a role for the company and HRD is not longer the actual!

# Career Counselling in HRD

- ▲ Counselling makes a contribution in different ways to human resources work.
  - Service provided by HR or
  - HR supports changing leadership role and counselling competence of managers
  - Offers to employees or managers (e.g. business partner model)
  - HR purchases external counselling and consulting services (control quality)



Today, there is still no comprehensive understanding of counselling in HRM. In many descriptions, counselling can be understood as an interface between business and individual rationality.



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# Career Counselling in HRD

- ▲ Counselling is sometimes understood as an overarching (strategic) instrument, but mostly individual counselling formats are promoted, offered or used selectively by HRM.
  - Individual offers: services by HRM for employees on particular topics or in specific problem situations (health, retirement, drug abuse).
  - Counselling as part of personnel development: specific counselling formats like coaching and mentoring, supervision and peer supervision
  - Counselling as element in systematic development programmes



In some companies, counselling is offered to support personnel development, further training, qualification, learning or career reflection as career guidance and counselling (CGC)



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# Career Counselling in HRD

## ▲ Who is counselling?

- Career support mostly is understood as a management task
- External counsellors are bought in (mostly for coaching)
- There are examples of career counselling as separate offer with professional or semi-professional counsellors (in the company).
- Counselling on qualification and training has gained importance as an external offer, especially for small companies



Theoretically and conceptually, the link between individualised HR and career counseling still needs to be developed. Professionalization is needed.



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## Variance of career counselling in HRD

1. Individual instruments like coaching or development interviews are restricted to specialized groups, mostly to higher levels of hierarchy. Career Guidance is not seen as an appropriate or relevant service for the whole group of employees.

2. Career support is linked to HRD instruments that built upon an individualistic perspective, but is organized in centralized form. The career support is not independent from a HRD driven process and thus not open to anybody.

3. Career guidance is an independent service aside other forms of coaching and HRD. The guidance service is independent from other HRD instruments and voluntary. Is is seen as a support for self driven development of internal careers.

4. Career guidance is understood as to supplement an individual driven career strategy (as the most appropriate way for staffing all kinds of positions). Forms of structured career development are not longer seen as appropriate.



Weber, 2020



# Variance of career counselling in HRD

## ▲ Influencing Factors:

- Size
- Branch
- HR culture and tradition
- HR professionalization
- Economic situation
- Recruiting situation



- Yet, just a minority of companies offer accessible career counselling
- Interesting examples should be more visible
- For SME external partners are needed



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## Part 3 – Elements of professional counselling

Career Counselling is not yet ready to adjust to the task in the HRD context



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# Elements of professional counselling

## Competence

- Process competence for effective counselling
- Reflection competence
- Methodological competence

## Structure

- Clear structures in the HR system
- Access for employees
- Definition of roles and competences

## Knowledge

- Knowledge on individual careers
- Knowledge on HR and companies
- Knowledge about changing world

## Professionalism

- Professional attitude
- Using scientifically based approaches
- Reflecting ethical boundaries

# Rethink roles and the need of specific competence



# Final thoughts

- We can summarize existing intersections between Counselling and HRD
- Further discussions should reflect the critical points for stronger or qualitative better career counselling as part of a HRD strategy
- Career counselling should describe and support innovative lines of development in HRD
- More research should investigate the intersection of CGC and HRD in a larger number of companies



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# Key Literature

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**Thank you for  
the Attention.**

**Questions?, Reactions?**

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