

## **METHODS FOR MODERNIZING THE HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE ARMED FORCES**

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**Abstract:** *The modernization of human resources within the Romanian Army must be one of the main priorities set by the commanders of military units, given its crucial importance in ensuring national security. The constant increase in service responsibilities, difficult environmental conditions, fatigue and poor physical, mental and emotional health are some of the main factors that human resources management tries to integrate in a way that leads technically and organisationally to the efficiency of the activity.*

*Digitisation and leadership are two distinct, but complementary ways of modernising human resources in an organisation. The purpose of this article is to highlight some methods of modernising the armed forces reporting to the evolvement of the national security policies using documentation and literature study.*

*By combining digitisation with modern leadership, organisations can create an efficient, innovative and adaptable working environment. Such an environment encourage a way of work where human resources to be valued and encouraged to achieve outstanding performance.*

**Keywords:** *digitisation; leadership; modernization; human resources.*

### **Introduction**

The modernisation of the human resource through digitalisation, motivation and leadership development and leadership skills focuses on the creation of an effective digital infrastructure and on the development of different leadership skills. Digitalisation and leadership are two factors that influence the productivity of an organisation with implications for the provision and development of national security (Kaldor 2010, 39).

It is recommended to combine technology, motivation and leadership development in order to create a modern, effective working environment aligned with the demands and opportunities brought about by technological change.

In a changing digital world, HR leaders play a crucial role in developing employees' digital skills. This includes both providing training and resources to support the development of these skills, and creating a work environment that encourages and supports the use of technology in everyday activities. Effective HR leadership involves the ability to understand and manage digitalisation and its impact on the organisation and its employees. An HR leader must be able to understand and adopt new technologies and integrate them into organisational practices to streamline recruitment, selection, assessment and development processes. Digitisation enables HR departments to improve their processes and provide faster and more efficient services to employees and managers (Kletter 2001, 6). An HR leader must lead digital transformation efforts to maximize the positive impact of technology on the department and the entire organization. Technology can be used to improve internal communication, facilitate collaboration and increase employee engagement in the organisational culture. An HR leader should promote and support the use of digital tools to create a more connected and collaborative work environment.

Career management mainly manages the career development of human resources, providing through various human resources tools a guide for human resources to map out their own possible career path, explaining the importance of each position in a person's professional development process (Iurcu and Dincă 2008, 25). Organisational development and individual employee development depend on each other and it is important that support is provided within an organisation for initiatives to progress within a given time horizon on a particular job, vertically or horizontally. The creation of a career development plan contributes to an employee's professional development and is the main guiding tool in this activity, setting out step-by-step the steps an individual needs to take in order to achieve their goal. Periodically, this plan needs to be evaluated because many factors influence a person's career path, and this path may or may not be ascending at certain times of life.

A human resources management system can be associated with a structure that allows all the specific activities of an organisation to be carried out and interact in a coherent and unified way.

In recent years, organisations have increasingly felt the need to modernise their HR system. Regardless of the size of the organisation, the development of the human resources management system depends very much on technological progress.

It is important to use the advantages of the digital age to improve human resource management. Nowadays there are a lot of different digital tools available that can help the human resource working in the HR department to streamline the work.

In order to contribute to national security, the military institutions have oriented their strategy towards the conclusion of as many partnerships as possible with national and international private organisations that contribute to the modernisation process of the Romanian Army.

## **1. Digitisation**

The digitisation of the system of human resources management through the implementation of software solutions (digital management tools), such as the use of an ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) or HRMS (Human Resources Management System) is a complex process that streamlines the work of the department (Pynes 2009, 57).

Moreover, cloud computing systems where there is the facility of on-demand availability of IT system resources, in particular data storage and computing power, without direct active user management, lead to the modernisation of the human resources management process, based on digital transformation (Mell and Grance 2011, 307). An important role in streamlining activity at the level of the Ministry of National Defence is played by the implementation of cloud services that provide scalable services for users and can be configured according to the security level of each user and each military structure. Deployment of cloud services within military structures can be hybrid so that modern infrastructures can be implemented in both classified and unclassified clouds. Cloud computing technologies facilitate the exchange of information between entities of all types.

Analyzing the process regarding the organization and functioning of the ranking and selection system for the career development of military personnel, based on the Order of the minister of national defence no. M.69/2015, as subsequently amended and supplemented, we observed that this activity is carried out through physical meetings attended by members of the selection committees that review the files of military personnel who have expressed their desire to apply for a vacant position.

In order to streamline and digitise this activity, we are presenting what automating this process entails by means of a selection application for military personnel seeking promotion and/or advancement in rank. Developing such an application might bring multiple benefits to military organizations. The selection criteria underlying the promotion and/or advancement of military staff are the professional performance acquired during their career.

The use of such a computerised system is intended to automate the process and reduce the time taken to carry out this activity. Also, it contributes to reducing the number of documents, make efficient use of the time needed to analyse the documents and reduce the number of staff involved in the technical secretariats of the selection committees.

Developing a computer application for the military system, particularly one that involves ranking and selection for career development of military personnel, within a private cloud environment while adhering to the rules on the protection of classified information in the Ministry of National Defence, requires careful planning, implementation, and adherence to security protocols.

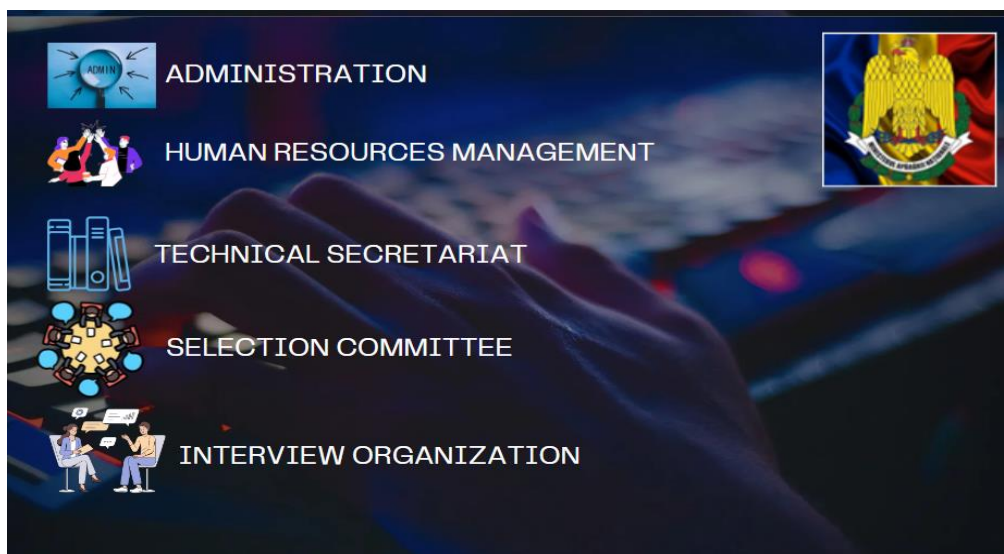
The advantages of such an application include simplifying the process of analysing proposals for promotion or advancement in grade. People involved in the process save a lot of time by not having to physically attend meetings and can attend selection board meetings from their own office, and documents are no longer passed from one member to another, reducing the risk of losing important documents. Digitisation contributes to a paperless working environment.

At the same time, much of the repetitive work involved in the promotion or advancement process can be done automatically, allowing the people involved to develop new skills and take on new responsibilities, increasing productivity in certain structures and simplifying certain work processes (Jones 1998, 20). A large part of the documents used in the process of promotion or advancement to the next grade are filled in and generated automatically, and the application can be linked to the RESMIL (the computerised human resources system of the Ministry of National Defence) computerised personnel records system.

With such an IT application, customised workflows can be created and the risk of missing certain documents is reduced as the application is updated in line with current legislation and users can be alerted before they have to perform a certain task via the comprehensive alert system.

Another functionality of the application is the creation of reports on the number of candidates to a given selection board, the number of candidates distributed by grade or the number of candidates accepted or rejected at selection board level. These reports can be generated in tabular or graphical form. The application might be designed to help you save time and is structured in five modules.

The IT application can be developed according to five modules - the Administration module, the Human Resources Structures module, the Technical Secretariat module, the Selection Committee module and the Interview Organisation module, according with figure number 1.



**Figure No. 1:** Modules of the militaries selection software application

The Administration module is used by the application administrator and is developed to manage the functionality of adding, modifying, deleting users and reporting the status of application users.

The Human Resources Structures module manages the processes related to the publication of positions in the Army Newsletter (AN) and allows the creation of electronic files of military personnel who wish to fill certain positions and of military personnel who meet the conditions for promotion to the next grade. The reports function generates the situation of candidates wishing to take up certain posts and of military staff who meet the conditions for advancement in rank at the level of each structure.

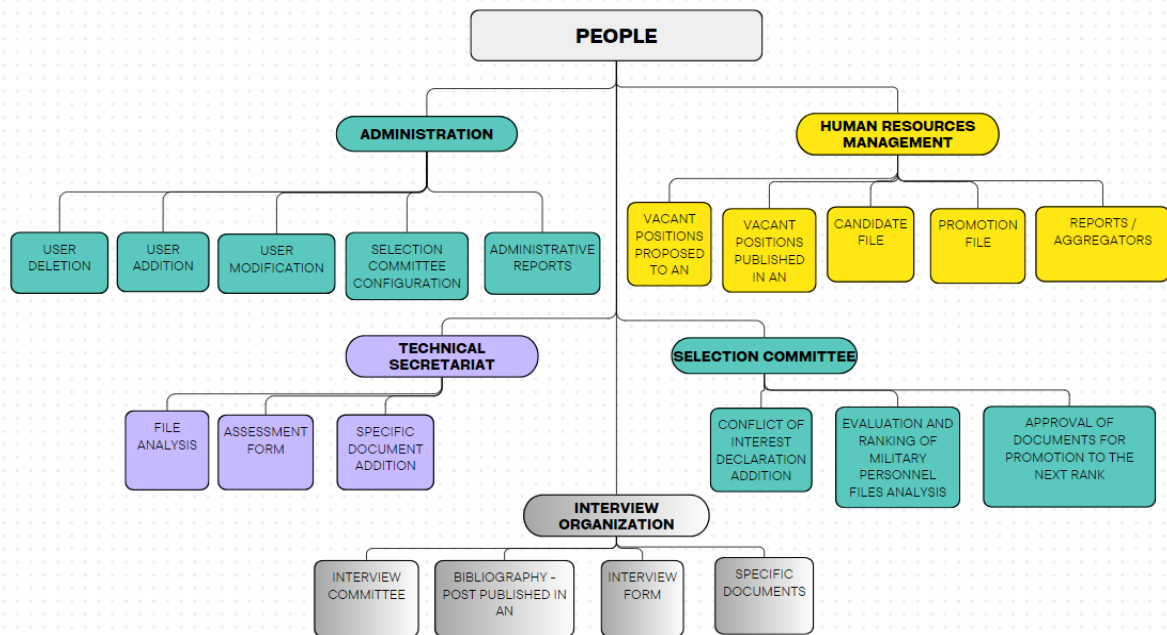
The Technical Secretariat module is a tool used to analyse the files of candidates who wish to fill certain posts and of military staff who meet the conditions for promotion.

At the same time, a function has been developed for the automatic generation of the evaluation sheets used by the selection boards in the process of analysing the conditions for appointment or promotion.

The Selection Committee module is developed for use by members of selection committees and is useful in the evaluation and scoring process as well as in the endorsement of specific documents.

The Interview Organisation module is developed for interview committees, automatically generating the interview plan and interview sheets for vacancies with interviews.

For a better understanding of the functionalities of this application, we present in figure number 2, the logic diagram of such an application.



**Figure No. 2:** Logical diagram of the militaries selection software application

Also, a variant of software implementation can be achieved by using the JAVA programming language (based on classes and objects) which is suitable for developing these types of applications. Java's combination of platform independence, object-oriented programming capabilities, rich standard library, scalability, security features, and strong community support make it a suitable choice for developing various types of HR applications. Java comes with a rich set of standard libraries that provide ready-to-use functionality for various tasks, such as handling input/output operations, working with databases, and managing date and time. These libraries can significantly streamline the development process for HR applications. Java's robustness and scalability make it suitable for developing HR applications that may need to handle large volumes

of data or support a growing number of users. Java's performance can be optimized through techniques such as multithreading and efficient memory management. Java has built-in features for security, including a robust security model and mechanisms for authentication, authorization, and encryption (Sierra and Bates 2005, 57). This is essential for HR applications that deal with sensitive employee data and need to comply with privacy regulations.

The architecture of this application can be a standard REST (software architecture type) architecture containing three levels: Controller (link between modules), Service (saving and editing action in the application) and Repository (link between the database and their visualisation in the application).

The implementation of such an application brings significant benefits to an organisation, as it allows the automation of specific human resources management processes. Another advantage is that it contributes to the efficiency of recruitment and selection activities, to the efficient management of military staff careers with a view to promotion or advancement, and to the improvement of decision-making transparency.

## **2. Leadership**

At the level of the military institutions, in order to be able to deal with the threats and changes that have arisen in recent times and to take the right decisions in good time, it is advisable to have one or more leaders in the team. Leadership is a dynamic and complex branch of human resource management that involves going through several steps to identify true leaders within an institution and to support them throughout their careers.

In training leaders, it is crucial to pay particular attention to their psychological preparation, especially in the context of international missions and the specific demands of a military career. Military leaders should develop a shared vision with mental and behavioral health professionals. Working closely with these professionals can provide a deeper understanding of the psychological factors that can affect military performance and morale. In the context of international missions, military leaders often face considerable stress. Leaders should be trained to build teams with high morale, even under difficult conditions. This involves not only managing operational tasks effectively, but also supporting the mental and emotional well-being of team members.

Military leaders should learn stress management techniques and be aware of the importance of maintaining a balance between work demands and personal life. Satisfactions and achievements in a military career should be highlighted to maintain morale and motivation. Psychological training should also focus on developing individual and team resilience. The ability to cope with challenges and bounce back after difficult events is essential in a military environment (Marineanu 2022, 15).

By addressing these issues, military leaders can help create an environment conducive to the professional and personal development of military personnel, while ensuring effective performance and high morale within the team.

Participation of leaders in training or coaching sessions focused on developing active listening skills is a significant and beneficial initiative, particularly in the context of preparing for military missions. Active listening is a crucial component of effective communication. By developing this skill, leaders can better understand subordinates' perspectives and concerns, which helps establish an open and effective communication channel. Participating in active listening training enables leaders to learn to provide more effective and impartial support. This is an important skill especially in military environments, where moral and emotional support can have a significant impact on individual and team performance. By participating in such training, military leaders are equipped not only with tactical and technical skills, but also with the tools to manage human relations and ensure that their subordinates feel heard, understood and supported before and during missions (Marineanu 2022, 15).

Establishing a supportive climate for military families during long-term missions is an essential part of the psychological training of military leaders. It is important to be aware of both the positive aspects, such as increasing family resilience, and the potential problems that may arise. Involving military leaders in addressing these issues helps to maintain balance and effectiveness in the missions. Military leaders should be trained to recognize potential signs of family problems and act promptly to address them. This may involve providing resources or referrals to organizations specializing in family support. Through these measures, military leaders can create a supportive environment where team members feel supported and their families are in a safe and well-managed environment. This holistic approach contributes to maintaining effectiveness and morale both during deployments and in the personal lives of military members.

Leadership is not defined by the position held, but is only a first step in the development process. The concept is that every individual can manifest leadership qualities, regardless of their position or role. This concept emphasises that leadership is not reserved only for those in positions of authority or formal power. Anyone can influence and inspire others, regardless of their role in the organisation or in everyday life. Leadership qualities can be expressed through actions, communication skills, empathy and the ability to mobilise and guide the team, regardless of formal title or position in the hierarchy.

In essence, leadership is a skill and a behaviour, not just an attribute linked to formal status. The focus is therefore on developing leadership skills in each individual, regardless of their role in the organisation or society. Management style is a causal variable with significant impact, as its practice generates various effects. The importance is not in the style itself, but rather in the results and impact it has on driving effectiveness. The character of each person is constantly reflected and communicated to those around them. The way you position yourself in relation to subordinates influences moods, work climate and dictates the evolution of interpersonal relationships within the organisation. A person's individual character is evident in their day-to-day behaviour, and the way they interact with subordinates directly influences team moods, the work climate and the way relationships develop between members of the organisation. It is important to understand that there is no single 'right' or 'ideal' leadership style. Instead, it is crucial to be aware of the impact of one's own style on those around them and to adapt accordingly to create a positive and effective work environment. In this way, the personal approach to leadership can shape organisational culture and influence the outcomes of the organisation as a whole.

Developing an existing motivation system in an organisation is one way of developing human resources. Motivating employees is essential for the optimal achievement of the organisation's objectives and for maintaining their loyalty to the company. Favourable working conditions and a friendly working environment have a significant impact on productivity, creativity and therefore on the financial stability of the organisation. An effective motivation system helps improve individual and collective performance, stimulates creativity and innovation, and promotes long-term employee commitment to the organisation. Creating supportive working conditions and a friendly working environment positively influences employee productivity, supports creative development and can ultimately contribute to the financial stability of the organisation.

Thus, modernising the motivation system is an investment in the organisation's human capital, with a significant impact on overall performance and employee well-being. It may involve revisiting traditional methods of motivation and implementing new, tailored approaches, adapted to the specific needs and expectations of the team. Employees show satisfaction with supportive managers, adopt a fair and equitable working style, while they become demotivated in the presence of arrogant and cold managers. The level of employee motivation is closely linked to employee productivity, so it is crucial that human resources department pays constant attention to the goal of motivation.

Within organisations, employees find motivation in rewards commensurate with their contribution and in fair treatment. It is therefore essential that the organisation implements a performance-based reward system. To achieve this, managers need to set clear performance indicators that are easy for employees to understand, and link rewards to the achievement of these indicators.

### **Conclusion**

Technology is a significant advantage for human resource management, especially in the context of the modernisation of the workforce system, where employees become more productive and develop greater trust in the organisation. Implementing an ERP system can bring multiple benefits, including saving time and effort by automating administrative tasks and speeding up internal processes. This technology solution can be applied in various areas such as payroll, recruitment, selection and performance appraisal, and can also help automate or mechanise routine tasks. Dedicated human resources management software (HRMS) can provide a significant boost to the modernisation of your people management system and contribute to staff retention as organisations increasingly look to integrate the digital work experience.

Human resources work can be streamlined if employees have access to cloud services to access data more easily anytime, anywhere, with lower IT maintenance costs. Cloud computing systems can help make HR more efficient and effective.

Both in terms of digitisation and leadership, digital democratisation can be called for, referring here to ways of transformation and modernisation. A starting point is also the modernisation of military education, with a focus on digital education, the introduction of digital education subjects and leadership training in the military education curriculum. This step is primarily about specialising teachers in this niche.

Leaders have a direct impact on organisational culture, strategies, decision making and therefore on organisational results. Knowing leaders enables employees to better understand the vision and values of the organisation, as leaders are instrumental in defining and promoting them. People who share the same vision and values with their leaders are more likely to be motivated and committed to achieving the organisation's goals.

By getting to know leaders, members of the organisation can work more effectively together, understanding strategic directions, values and leadership styles.

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