

PERSONNEL CERTIFICATION AS A COMPANY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Bogdana Vyshnivska¹

Abstract. The *purpose* of this article is to explore how personnel certification serves as a strategic tool for organisational development. It examines the importance of certifying employees as a means of enhancing organisational capability and competitiveness. By examining the role of certification in improving employee skills and knowledge, the article sheds light on its impact on organisational performance and growth. It also discusses how certified personnel contribute to building a skilled workforce, fostering innovation and meeting industry standards. Overall, the article highlights the importance of personnel certification as a proactive approach to advancing organisational development goals. The *object* of the study is the process of personnel certification and its impact on the company's development. *Methodology.* The use of an integrated method helps to eliminate formalism and subjectivity in personnel certification, increase openness and objectivity in the assessment, and stabilise the social and psychological climate in the team. When applying this method, a prerequisite is the unconditional support of the first manager, who should lead the personnel certification and implement its results through the HR services. Without it, certification will be formal and will not yield positive results. The comprehensive method of personnel evaluation integrates various assessment techniques to provide a holistic understanding of an individual's skills, competencies and performance within an organisation. It takes into account multiple factors such as job performance, behavioural characteristics and growth potential, allowing for a thorough analysis of an employee's contribution to the organisation. The comprehensive method of personnel evaluation is based on the use of groups of methods: descriptive method (biographical method; method of oral and written assessments, method of group discussions, method of standards, matrix method and method of free and compulsory choice of assessment situations); combined methods are methods based on the descriptive principle, but formalised with the help of conventional quantitative indicators (sum of scores method, method of specified groupings, testing).

Research results. Evaluating personnel performance helps to attract and retain highly skilled and motivated employees, while analysing the effectiveness of recruitment strategies and methods will help to attract talented employees. *Practical implications.* The use of personnel evaluation methods will allow to understand how personnel certification contributes to creating a positive working environment and increasing the level of employee satisfaction; to study the impact of personnel certification strategies on the company's reputation among employees; to formulate specific recommendations for practical managers and personnel specialists for the successful implementation of personnel certification strategy; to develop strategic solutions aimed at increasing the competitiveness and stability of the company. *Value/Originality.* Personnel certification helps to improve internal and external communication, which contributes to a more effective exchange of information and helps to maintain unity among employees; it allows companies to adapt to changes in the labour market, creating attractive conditions for employees in new conditions.

In general, effective personnel certification is determined by the ability not only to attract but also to retain talented employees, thus contributing to the sustainable development of the company in a competitive business environment.

Keywords: development strategies of the company, personnel certification, certification criteria, certification process, results of personnel evaluation.

JEL Classification: J53, M50, M45, M54

¹ National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine (*corresponding author*)

E-mail: bogdanavyshnivska@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3166-7567>



1. Introduction

Personnel certification (or HR marketing) is a strategic approach to people management that uses marketing elements to attract, retain and develop talented people in an organisation. The basic idea is to view employees as "customers" and to develop strategies that take into account their needs, expectations and satisfaction with the work environment.

Personnel certification may include the following elements:

1. Employer brand. Creating a positive image of the company among potential employees. This may include advertising, participation in employer ratings, social media and other channels.

2. Attractive working environment. Providing comfortable working conditions, opportunities for development and career growth, bonuses and benefits for employees.

3. Communications and interaction. Promoting effective communication within the organisation, creating programmes of interaction and mutual understanding between teams.

4. Recruitment and selection of personnel. Implementation of marketing strategies to attract and select candidates, including the use of effective job advertisements, participation in career fairs, etc.

5. Personnel certification. A systematic and periodic process of evaluating an individual employee's performance against established job requirements. This process includes a subjective assessment of the employee's strengths and weaknesses, alignment with the organisation's values and potential.

In turn, personnel certification, as an enterprise development strategy, includes a number of actions and approaches aimed at attracting, retaining and developing highly qualified personnel to achieve the company's strategic goals (Kis, Mosora, ... Pobihun, 2020).

Thus, personnel certification and personnel attestation interact to create an attractive working environment, develop talent and manage the career growth of employees in the company. Personnel certification and personnel attestation interact in the context of human resource management in the organisation as a whole.

This article is devoted to this topical issue.

2. Concept and Definition of Personnel Certification

Personnel attestation and personnel certification are interrelated HR management strategies. Both approaches aim to create a positive and productive work environment where employees feel valued and have opportunities for growth. They foster a corporate culture that supports collaboration and engagement,

and help attract and retain talent within the organisation. Both approaches can have an impact on an employer's reputation and ability to attract qualified personnel in the labour market. Thus, their combination can contribute to effective HR management and the achievement of the company's strategic goals.

Many Ukrainian scholars give different definitions of the term "personnel certification".

Personnel certification is an activity in which the certification commission determines the degree of compliance of an employee with the position held (Dashko, Krylov, Mykhailichenko, 2022).

Certification is a procedure for systematic formalised assessment of each employee's performance in accordance with the standards of work performance in their position (Hrishnova, Dmytrenko, Ivanisov, Myronova, 2023).

Certification is a procedure for formalised systematic evaluation of the compliance of a particular employee's work with the standards of performance of this work in the workplace over a certain period of time according to specified criteria (Lukashev, Syvash, 2021).

Hence, one can say that personnel certification, or evaluation of compliance with the position held, is a procedure that systematically and formally assesses the performance of a particular employee in a particular position. This evaluation is carried out according to certain criteria and clear performance standards set for a given job within a certain period of time (Hunsinger, Smith, Winter, 2011).

The key elements of this definition:

Systematic. Personnel certification, which is carried out unsystematically, from time to time, is not considered to be such. Even if it is decided to conduct certification, the frequency should be set – once a quarter, half a year, a year (at least once a year).

Formality (not from the word formality). It is necessary to prepare for the certification not only orally but also in writing, to develop forms in which the results will be recorded.

The criteria should be established in advance and it should be clear what is being assessed. Any final assessment is made up of many assessments. The criteria should be well thought out and relevant to the job responsibilities.

The purpose of the certification is to rationally place employees and to effectively use their knowledge, skills and abilities. Based on the results of the certification, the head of the organisation has the right to make decisions on: promotion (demotion) of an employee in the qualification category; increase (decrease) of the official salary; determination of incentives; resolving the issue of advanced training, acquisition of a new speciality. The main objective of the certification is not to

control performance, but to identify reserves for increasing the level of employee commitment.

Certification performs both explicit and latent (hidden) functions. The explicit ones include establishing the fact that a particular employee meets the requirements of the position he or she holds. Thus, the purpose of the certification is to make an official decision that preserves (confirms) or changes the social status (position) of the certified person (Demianenko, Ivanisov, 2022). The purpose of the certification may also be to monitor the performance of the task, identify unused opportunities, and decide on ways and forms of training and retraining.

The concept of "certification" is closely related to the concept of "business evaluation" (Apostoliuk, Bohach, Shkilniak, 2022). Business personnel assessment is a purposeful process of determining the compliance of personnel's qualitative characteristics – abilities, motivation, and attributes – with the requirements of a position or workplace. Depending on the degree of compliance, the following tasks are solved: determining the employee's place in the organisational structure; developing employee development programmes; determining the criteria and amount of remuneration.

Business personnel assessment allows to solve the following tasks: establishing feedback with the employee on professional and organisational issues; satisfying the employee's need to assess their own work and qualitative characteristics.

There are two main types of business assessment of personnel:

- Evaluation of candidates for vacant positions or jobs, recruitment;
- current periodic evaluation of the company's personnel (certification of personnel).

Evaluation of candidates for vacant positions includes:

- Preliminary interview;
- analysis of specific data;
- entering data about the candidate;
- verification exams, testing;
- physical examination;
- main interview;
- preparation of an expert opinion.

The current periodic assessment of personnel (certification) involves the following (Vodolazhska, Achkasova, 2022):

- Preliminary evaluation of the employees by their external environment;
- summarisation by the manager, processing of the preliminary assessment data and preparation for the assessment interview;
- evaluation conversation between the manager and subordinates;
- preparation of an expert opinion by the manager and its submission to the HR department;

– in some cases, conducting an evaluation interview with the certification commission.

The recommended frequency of ongoing personnel assessment is at least once a year. If necessary, additional types of evaluation may be carried out – based on the results of training, in the course of monitoring the adaptation of employees.

The business assessment of personnel should answer the question: whether the actual state of this criterion meets the requirements of the position or workplace. Classification groups (criteria) and assessment indicators corresponding to each group (Kpikunenko, 2021):

- Labour productivity (quality of job performance), a quantitative indicator that is actually influenced by the employee's activities (profit, turnover, attraction of new clients, consumers, success of negotiations);
- conditions for achieving labour efficiency – performance by the employee of general management functions (planning, organisation, regulation, control, reporting) both in relation to external objects and in relation to their own activities; performance by the manager of motivational, representative and advisory functions;
- professional behaviour – the ability to cooperate and interchangeability; completion of tasks on time; readiness for additional workload and responsibility; correctness in relations with clients and subordinates.

3. Structure of the Personnel Certification Process

Personnel certification includes several stages and may have different algorithms depending on the specific needs and strategy of the company (Joshi, Diwakar & Joshi-Kale, Mugdha, 2022) However, the main steps and a possible algorithm of actions may be as follows:

1. Preparation for certification:

- Determination of the purpose of the certification and its relationship to business goals.
- Development of criteria and standards for assessing the suitability of a position.
- Notifying employees about the upcoming certification and providing the necessary information.

2. Collection of information:

- Collection of data about the employee's work, achievements and contribution to the work.
- Evaluation of tasks, compliance with criteria and identification of strengths and weaknesses.

3. Evaluation and analysis:

- Conducting a job fit assessment based on the information collected.
- Analysis of results and identification of development and improvement needs.

4. Report and discussion:

- Preparation of certification reports for each employee.
- Discussing the results with employees and providing constructive feedback.

5. Development of development plans:

- Determination of individual and group development plans for employees.
- Setting goals and specific steps for improvement.

6. Monitoring and review:

- Creation of a monitoring system to track employee development.
- Periodic review and update of certification processes.

7. Application of results:

- Use of certification results in decision-making processes for staff development, career advancement, etc.

This algorithm may vary depending on the specifics of the company and its HR management needs.

The structure of the personnel certification system may vary depending on the specific needs and characteristics of the organisation. However, the main components of a personnel certification system may include the following (Figure 1).

Each of these stages has its own characteristics.

1. Purpose and objectives:

Formulate a clear purpose for certification and define specific objectives to be achieved. The



Figure 1. Structure of the personnel certification system

purpose of personnel certification is to systematically evaluate and develop the qualifications and skills of employees in accordance with the organisation's work standards. The objectives of the process are to determine the employee's suitability for the position, to identify the employee's strengths and weaknesses, and to develop individual development plans to improve efficiency and resolve personnel issues.

2. Criteria and standards:

Development of objective criteria and standards that determine the suitability of the position and evaluate the employee's performance. Certification criteria and standards establish specific parameters against which an employee's suitability for the position is assessed. These objective measures include skills, knowledge, performance and other factors that determine successful job performance. Clearly defined criteria and standards help create an objective evaluation system and contribute to the development of individual development plans for employees.

3. Evaluation system:

Identification of assessment methods and tools, such as questionnaires, job observations, interviews, etc. An evaluation system, in the context of employee assessment, refers to a structured process for measuring an individual's performance against pre-defined criteria and standards. It involves the collection and analysis of relevant data to assess the employee's alignment with job requirements, strengths and areas for improvement. The purpose of an evaluation system is to provide an objective basis for performance feedback, development planning and talent management decision-making.

4. Stages of certification:

Consideration and definition of specific milestones, including preparation, information gathering, assessment, reporting, discussion and development plans.

5. Definition of participants:

The definition of participants in the context of certification includes various individuals involved in the assessment process. These typically include the employees being evaluated, their supervisors or managers responsible for conducting the assessment, and possibly external experts or HR managers who contribute to the evaluation process. Clear identification and understanding of the roles of each participant will ensure a comprehensive and fair assessment that is consistent with the organisation's objectives and standards.

6. Communication and training of employees:

Development of a communication system to notify employees of certification and provide the necessary information.

7. Processing of results:

The processing of results in the certification process involves a thorough analysis and interpretation of the data collected to gain meaningful insights into each participant's performance. This stage includes identifying patterns, trends and areas for improvement to enable informed talent management decisions. The results are then summarised in reports that form the basis for discussions with employees, provide constructive feedback and form the basis for individual development plans within the organisation.

8. Creation of development plans:

The development of development plans in the context of certification involves the formulation of individual strategies for employees to enhance their skills and address identified areas for improvement. These plans typically outline specific goals, milestones and actions that individuals can take to further their professional growth. By tailoring development plans to the individual needs and aspirations of each employee, organisations aim to promote continuous improvement, align individual goals with organisational objectives and support the overall success of their workforce.

9. Monitoring and review:

Creation of a monitoring system to continuously update and improve the certification system.

10. Documentation:

Collection and storage of documentation related to the certification process and results.

This framework can serve as a basis for developing an effective personnel certification system tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of the organisation.

Certification is regulated by legislative and normative-methodological acts of the state. At the same time, within the limits of the legislation, enterprises may develop their own regulations on certification of employees based on specific objectives. The preparation and conduct of the appraisal process is organised by the company's management with the mandatory participation of the trade union. In accordance with the requirements of the law, the term, the list of employees to be certified, the composition of the commission, the rules and criteria of certification and the schedule are determined. Preparation for certification includes processing the necessary documents, organising explanatory work on the objectives and procedure of certification. For each employee subject to certification, the immediate superior prepares a description with a comprehensive assessment of the correspondence of the employee's professional education and business qualifications with the existing requirements for the respective position; attitude to work and performance of duties; performance indicators for the past period; implementation

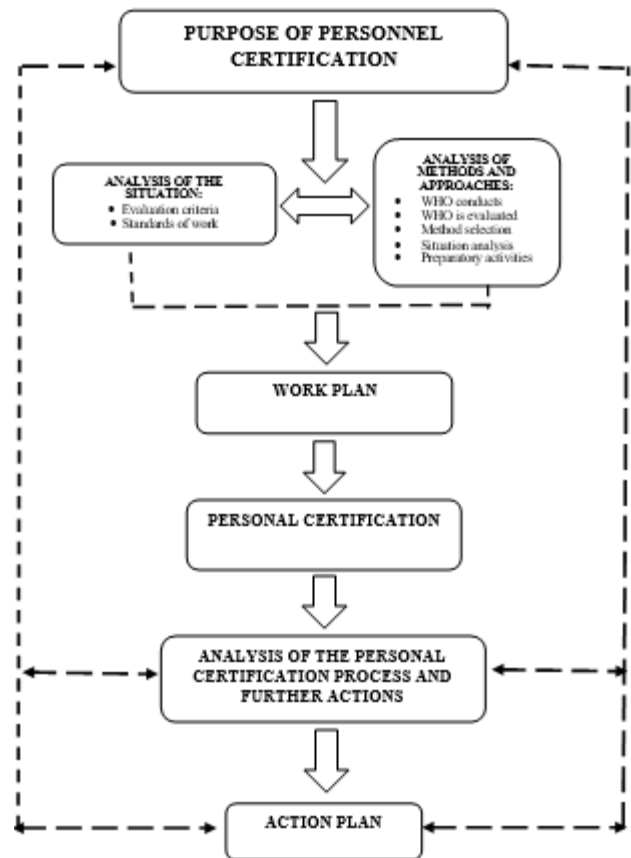


Figure 2. Algorithm of personnel certification

of the recommendations of the preliminary certification.

The certification process can and should be structured in the same way as any other process in the company (Figure 2).

Consider this scheme step by step.

Purpose of personnel certification

The goal is to rationally deploy employees and effectively use their knowledge, skills and abilities.

Analysis of the situation

There are many questions to ask before starting the certification process. The more information that is collected at the preliminary stage, the less extra work will have to be done when choosing certification methods.

Analysis of methods and approaches

Out of all the different methods, it is necessary to choose those that are suitable for the company and that can be applied. Different approaches have their own requirements for staff qualifications and training, the moral climate in the team, and the availability of time and money.

Work plan

After deciding on the purpose and methods of personnel certification, it is necessary to draw up a detailed work plan describing who is involved in the certification process, what stages and timeframes the process should take place, what resources are needed,

and who is responsible for individual stages and the process as a whole. In companies, it is recommended that this plan be approved by an organisational order.

Personnel certification

Employee certification is carried out in all departments of the company. The head of the company determines the list of positions to be certified and the timing of the certification. Certification schedules are communicated to employees one month in advance, and the necessary documents are submitted to the Certification Commission two weeks in advance. A Certification Commission is established to carry out the certification process. The human resources manager submits a proposal for the composition of the Certification Commission. The official composition of the Certification Commission is announced and approved by the head of the company by means of an official order.

Analysis of the personnel certification process and further actions

Analysis of certification results can not only provide a better understanding of the work of a particular employee. Certification offers a lot for understanding the situation in the organisation. It is clear that the results depend on the objective set and the methods used.

Action plan

It is equally important to develop an action plan based on the results of the certification. For example, if the goal was to identify the need for training of employees, it is necessary to develop a plan for such training; if the certification was conducted in order to assess the compliance of employees' activities with requirements, it is necessary to develop an action plan to bring the activities and requirements into compliance. (Vyshnivska, 2022).

Based on the results of the certification for a particular employee, it is possible to draw reasonable conclusions about the need for training and development, their place in the organisation, career planning, salary changes, and disciplinary actions.

4. Conclusions

The conclusions of the study highlight the key role of personnel certification in facilitating comprehensive organisational assessment and planning. By using certification processes, companies gain valuable insights into the overall functioning of the organisation and individual departments. This includes assessing workload distribution, allocating resources to strategic initiatives and evaluating the feasibility of achieving organisational goals with existing resources. In addition, certification enables organisations to assess their readiness to adopt new technologies and adapt to changing work environments, thereby improving labour productivity.

The study also highlights the importance of skills certification in aligning recruitment efforts with the organisation's development strategy. Personnel certification plays a crucial role in identifying candidates with the skills and experience required to drive organisational growth. By analysing the labour market, the business leader can identify emerging trends and anticipate changing staffing requirements, thereby informing strategic decisions. The study also highlights that the successful implementation of development strategies depends on the ability to attract and retain competent and motivated employees. Thus, HR marketing strategies serve as important tools for attracting and retaining talent, ensuring alignment with the company's overall goals.

Further research could explore the specific methodologies and frameworks used in personnel certification processes and marketing strategies. In addition, research into the long-term impact of personnel certification on organisational performance and employee satisfaction could provide valuable insights. Exploring the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and data analytics, in optimising personnel certification practices could be a promising avenue of research. Overall, continued research in these areas is essential to enhance organisational effectiveness and competitiveness in a company's development strategy.

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Received on: 15th of February, 2024

Accepted on: 03th of March, 2024

Published on: 30th of April, 2024