



Local managers: lynchpins of business transformation following the health crisis

Charles-Henri Besseyre des Horts,

- Emeritus Professor HEC Paris -

President of Francophone Association of HR Academics

Numerous testimonies describing the experiences of companies faced with the emergency of the health crisis during the lock-down and after have emphasized the crucial role played by local managers in this troubled period without having been prepared, in most cases, to a crisis of this magnitude. In many respects, the recognition, which the famous “shadow heroes” have enjoyed over the past few months, can legitimately also be owed to them because, without their commitment and their numerous initiatives in the field, many organizations, public and private, would have experienced great difficulties in ensuring the continuity of their activities.

However, the discomfort of local supervision has been highlighted for several decades in many books and articles until the recent book of the French sociologist François Dupuy in which he criticizes, among other things, the effects of centralization, in particular in the field of human resources, which "has the consequence of worsening the lack of means of action of the hierarchical line. This produces many perverse effects, from the discouragement of close supervision, to suffering and disengagement from work".

Faced with this unease, the current crisis should be an opportunity to give back to these key players, who are local managers, a major role in the hoped-for transformation of our organizations towards more autonomy and subsidiarity, leading them to be more agile. This movement of funds, initiated a

few years ago in a number of companies such as Michelin with its empowerment approach, has been considerably reinforced recently during the confinement period and afterwards because many local managers have demonstrated the unsuspected capacities of initiative to the point of practicing “corporate hacking”, by disobeying certain rules for the good of the company and its survival. But the freedom to act which was given to them during this exceptional period could be threatened by a return to normal if this is confirmed.

To avoid such a situation and allow the company to develop in depth in the wake of the health crisis, local managers should be recognized as the linchpins of the transformation by leaders and senior management. In this perspective, HRDs are likely to be the pilots of this movement to recognize local management by aligning HR policies and practices (recruitment, training, performance management, remuneration, career, etc...) to change individual and collective mentalities in the direction of greater subsidiarity in decisions and management based on trust. Ultimately, the recognition of local managers as the linchpins of business transformation can only become a reality if it is brought to the highest level by the CEO who would adopt a posture of "servant leader" like the Indian leader Vineet Nayar in his turnaround as President of HCL Technologies between 2005 and 2013

We work hard at keeping up to date and informed on the latest trends and news affecting the world of people analytics & strategic workforce planning. If you would like to know more about the work we do, then please contact us at:
info@humdex.com

*Uploaded by- Scott Brent **Director***

