Upcoming generations in the law enforcement and national security field

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Absztrakt

Az elkövetkező években jelentős változások várhatók a hazai munkaerőpiacon, köszönhetően az új generációk megjelenésének. A rendvédelmi szervek és a nemzetbiztonsági szolgálatok esetében ez különösen jelentős kihívást generál, tekintettel a hagyományos értékrendjük és az új generációs jellemzők közötti különbségekre. Annak érdekében, hogy a szolgálatok a jövőben is képesek legyenek megtartani és felvenni a legjobb munkaerőt, szükséges vizsgálni a jövőbeni fejlesztési lehetőségeket figyelembe véve az új generációs sajátosságokat.

Kulcsszavak: rendvédelem, nemzetbiztonság, generációk, kihívások, szervezeti kultúra, fejlesztés

Abstract

In the next years there will be significant changes on the labour market, thanks to the appearance of the new generations. As for the law enforcement organizations and national security services this tendency will generate particular challenges, regarding the differences between their traditional values and the characteristics of the new generations. In order to keep their ability for holding and recruiting the most appropriate staff, it is necessary to evaluate the possible ways of development considering the new generations' attitudes and attributes.

Keywords: law enforcement, national security, generations, challenges, organizational culture, development

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In the next decades major and fast transformation is about to happen in the environment of the state security organizations regarding the composition of the staff. Among the forthcoming changes one of the most decisive one will be the issue of the new generations' characteristics. Not only will their different attitude mean great challenge, but the acceleration of the generational exchanges. While in the last centuries a certain generation was exchanged for another in about 40-50 years, nowadays 15 years are enough for this process. This means that there are not only 1-2 generations are actually present in the labour market, but at least 3-4 very different ones altogether.

Considering the fact that the national labour market is less fragmented, therefor the same basis of selection is available for every employer, no matter of their sort. Above all the law enforcement and national security sphere has to cope with even more difficulties because of its operational characteristics, which set up specific conditions and expectations. Besides their hierarchic and authoritarian organizational culture will generate further challenges in their human resource management, for which they have to be prepared soon.

During the previous years some steps have already been taken, initiated by these organizations, aiming to obtain more knowledge about the upcoming generations' way of thinking and expectations. The reason for that is quite simple, since these organizations experienced the difficulties and challenges through their recruitment procedures caused by the generational differences, for which appropriate solutions need to be found. However handling these challenges demands such new tools, methods and suggestions which are based on and inspired by grounded, overall and specific researching results.

It is a fact, that within reasonable time every employer must prepare for certain changes, which will be indicated by the different habits, motivation and ideology of the potential employees. The currently active and socially better integrated X generation will be shifted by the Y and Z generations, and within 15 years the Alphas are coming. However these generations compared to the previous ones possess distinct motivations, work ethic and expectations.

Above all it is also a matter of interest that how the members of the different generations working in the same environment can fit to each other, in order to end up in a well-operated, understanding and cooperating team and community. Besides certain other aspects should be taken into consideration, such as the dynamic and continuous technological environment, which is a major interest for the upcoming generations, and furthermore their different communicational habits, which necessarily effects their sociocultural relations.

There aren't too many experiences available about the upcoming generations' working habits, therefor the changing situation needs further evaluation, including the possible implementations of outstarter methods. The most obvious way for that is to obtain knowledge, to analyze the new generational particularities and to study the law enforcement sphere's current phase and possibilities.

General characteristics for the new generations

Y generation (1980-1994)

Generally they are ambitious, brave and initiative, and can easily fit into any multicultural environment, however they have high expectations for their working place, especially as for the salary and the leave. They are open for the novelties and quickly adapt themselves for the technological innovations. Unlike their parents they reject the anxious way of life, so if they can't identify themselves with a certain task or environment, they tend to quit easily, because their primary aim is to enjoy their profession and to reach the balance between work and private life, instead of neglecting personal freedom.

They manage their relationships virtually and actually at the same time. They are often called the reversed socializing generation, since in contrast with the previous ones they obtain knowledge by themselves or with the help of their mates, instead of having taught by their ascendants. Besides usually they are the ones, who teach elder generations how to use digital devices and applications.

Self-fulfilment plays a major role in their lives, however they likely work in teams. They have different expectations for their studies as well, demanding much more interactivity, variegation and flexible time-management. Their pretension for intense study and their capacities of concentration are lower, and they are more impatient.

Z generation (1995-2009)

They are the digital aboriginals, who were socialized into the full scale possibilities of the virtual world, therefor they get used to gain all the necessary information almost exclusively from the internet. Most of their social lives connect to new kinds of digital platforms, and they are used to have instant access to all the information needed. Due to this they prefer new teaching and learning methods, moreover they are usually multi-tasking, thus they can hardly pay attention exclusively to only one thing.

However they are able to adapt themselves to changes fast and they aren't afraid of new technologies. They are positively curious, but their interests are hard to be engrossed for long-term. They get accustomed to continuous and constant communication with others, which are mostly connected to the virtual space, therefor generally they were socialized by the virtual community, and they feel more confident in the virtual platforms.

Apart from that this generation likes to work in teams or in offices, and not afraid of the traditional working order unless it is located to a certain place.

Alpha generation (2010-)

We haven't enough information about them, since the oldest members of them are still attending primary school. Aside from that the researchers are actively trying to observe their behavior and attitude, because they will join the labour market within 10-15 years.

They don't have experience about not having the internet, therefor they are addicted to it, which will lead them to become the loneliest generation. Besides they have to face such challenges in their lives as the global warming, aging societies, the lack of certain resources etc., for which they will be expected to find solutions.

Because of their constant virtual presence, their information processing and learning habits will differ from the previous generations, similarly to their consuming and working preferences. This generation will be raised up in a dynamically developing technological environment hence their primary source for communication will be mobile phones and applications. Thanks to the possibilities given by the internet, many of them may gain publicity among virtual communities therefor they will probably be braver and more adventurous when they grow up.

Comparing to the previous generations the Alphas in some ways may become much more qualified and effective. Presumably the online forms of education will be preferred by them instead of traditional teaching methods. Besides the cycle of their learning process starts earlier and lasts actually life-long.

Most parts of their lives will be managed through the internet – including shopping and official administration – and because of that paradoxically this generation will be more isolated than ever, in spite of the instant access to anything and anybody.

As for their communication habits, it can be stated that e-mailing has lost its priority and has been replaced by the Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram, which are currently the most preferred platforms by them for keeping contacts.

The characteristics and expectations of the Hungarian law enforcement organizations and national security services

The scope of activities of the law enforcement organizations and national security services are regulated by the law and subject to certain levels of authorization, and strict controlling mechanisms which guarantee the firm application of legislative provisions. All these derive from the special features of functioning and by all means are necessary. It cannot and shouldn't be changed, however the strict rules apply not only to the circumstances of their functioning, but to their staff members as well.

The strict rules and discipline, the highly hierarchic organizational structure and the conservative aspect have been characteristic for the law enforcement

and national security sphere for decades. Accordingly most of the requirements towards the staff are based on these expectations. Furthermore high capacity of workload, stress tolerance, regulatory compliance, responsibility, vocation, loyalty, willingness for cooperation, stable values, moral strength, trustfulness and precise working habit are certain competencies which are among the fundamental expectations of the law enforcement and national security organizations.

Besides the necessity of strict regulation these state organizations will have to adapt themselves to the changing labour market, and as an employer must regard the characteristics of the upcoming generation in order to ensure high quality working standards with the appropriate staff. In case the organizational values and workplace approach won't be fitted to the changes of labour market tendencies, than the gap between the expectations of employers and employees will inevitably increase. Of course it is often stated that the law enforcement and national security organizations don't belong to the classical members of the labour market and are differ from the multinational and other kinds of companies. On the other hand it must be noticed that the Hungarian labour market is less fragmented, therefor the same basis of selection is available for all kinds of employers. The new generations are to be determinative role players of the labour market soon, thus those companies who are able to renew themselves will be more effective on the long term by obtaining the most talented employees.

Examining the topic from the point of view of the law enforcement and national security organizations as employers, on one hand there are remarkable differences concerning their expectations, but from certain aspects some fitting criteria can be found. Such particularities of the upcoming generations as rejecting authoritarianism, de-emphasizing loyalty and constant usage of social media platforms are certainly not favoured by these organizations. On the other hand such features as creativity, innovation, dynamism, teachability and curiosity which are characteristics for the younger generations may be desirable for these organizations as well.

Naturally neither the employers nor the employees are expected to change basically, but these kinds of evaluations regarding the future expectations are meant to help both of them to realize the necessary ways of development.

Possibilities

Regarding the above examined aspects it is obvious that the need for change concerns many factors and areas. Hereinafter I would like to draw attention to those segments and related possibilities which can be easily recognized and developed by the law enforcement organizations and secret services without the approval of higher directives.

First of all the revision of their culture and their values is inevitable and indispensable, because the existing strongly hierarchical environment may retain the upcoming generations from joining. However the existing values don't have

to be eliminated, more likely a kind of synthetizing process is needed, in which the traditional and the newer values can be harmonized in order to ensure all the members to find their place and mission in these organizations. The first step should be a wider opening towards the society in order to get rid of the decades-long stereotypes which still influence their reputation and respect. Fortunately there have been many positive examples for that in the past years, which verify their intention for that, nevertheless some aspects of their communication can be further improved.

The inner communication of these organizations will play a major role too particularly in socializing the newcomers. The evolution of the organizational culture and communication is never random, but an outcome of an institutional strategy, and should be a part of a conscious procedure, in which the leaders of the organization have major impact. On the other hand for instance it is useless to create a well-planned human resource strategy if it cannot be implemented in the everyday operation, and contradicts the actual experiences. Convinced identification with the mission and values of a certain organization demands clear-cut and consistent communication and actions. Above all the upcoming generations will be highly sensitive to the advancement of the organizational culture therefor to concentrate on that is a must.

Besides these organizations shouldn't put aside the importance of the clearly communicated message about their mission and vision towards the society, since that may establish their prestige and appreciation, which can ultimately increase their attractiveness as employers too. One of the major elements of that procedure is their way of appearance in the media, either in reports and news, or on their websites and others platforms. If we take a closer look at that segment it can be ascertained that the Hungarian law enforcement organizations and secret services are quite stranded comparing to many foreign services, for instance their websites are mostly outdated and less attractive for the high-tech generations. However it must be repeatedly emphasized that up-to-datedness mustn't be at the expense of secrecy, but it should have creative appearance and fetching content.

Another major part of the necessary development is the innovative approach which refers not only to the means and methods, but to every aspect of the organizations' activities, including the human resource management as well. Let us examine for instance the process and method of recruitment and selection, which generally have decades-long traditions in these organizations. However by now the world has changed a lot, so do the individuals, not to mention the characteristics of the younger generations, thus some parts of these methods and systems must inevitably be revised and tailored to the present situation. Which were appropriate 5-10 years ago, that don't necessarily stand the ground today, at least not in unchanged form. Once again it doesn't mean that traditional methods must be eliminated, but the organizations should open to the

new approaches, and strive for combining them with the traditional ones as much as it possible.

The employees of the future have other preferences than before concerning their career, so if an employer wants to be successful and effective in admitting the most suitable staff, then the easiest way for that is to catch up with the new trends. For example if we know that our potential future employees tend to search and apply for a job through virtual platforms, then we should look for them and draw their attentions that way. This can have many forms, for instance a multi-level, internet-based filtering application system, which includes different kinds of tasks to solve. In the end those who were able to get through the certain exercises, may be drafted for personal interview. This method would spare time and energy for the organizations, and would be attractive for the potential employees at the same time. Accordingly the same is valid up to the learning and preparation processes. The traditional forms of education are mainly no longer proper and effective for the younger generations therefor it would be useful to integrate innovative and modern learning and teaching methods, such as e-learning, and situation-based, specific exercises, outdoor activities etc. Many more possibilities for the development can be recited, but the purpose of this publication is only to draw the law enforcement organizations' and national security services' attention to the future challenges deriving from the characteristics of the upcoming generations.

On the whole it can be summarized that knowing the features and expectations of the upcoming generations, the employers won't be in easy situation, nevertheless there are many ways and possibilities for them to evolve. In the changing global security environment the law enforcement organizations and secret services will play more important role than ever, but their effectiveness will highly depend on their ability to keep and to apply the most talented and appropriate staff. For that it is necessary for them to examine the future trends and to adapt themselves for the changes, while keeping the balance between the traditional and newer values.

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