

Exploration of some of the 7 concepts identified as constituting a “circular” HRM

Business Case: GI (Europe)

The Cradle to Cradle Certified™ Products Standard is a globally-recognised methodology used to constantly evaluate the sustainable attributes of products, and a tool for the glass industry’s response to the circular economy challenge.

The standard evaluates products across five categories of human and environmental health, and encourages continuous improvement over time by awarding certification on the basis of ascending levels of achievement and requiring certification renewal every two years.

Interview: Human Resources Director, for Europe, Russia and Middle East.

Date of interview: 16 October 2020

Context:

Guardian Industries is the largest business and one of the world’s largest manufacturers of float, value-added and fabricated glass products and solutions. “At our 25 float plants located around the globe, Guardian Glass produces high performance glass for architectural, residential, interior, transportation and technical glass applications. You will find our glass in homes, offices and cars and in some of the world’s most iconic projects. Our energy-efficient, low-E-coated glass is designed to meet the toughest architectural and aesthetic challenges. At our Science & Technology Centre, we continuously work to create new glass products and solutions using the most advanced technology.”

Concept 1

The design of ‘work practices’ and ‘work spaces’, emphasising maximum positive impact on a worker during his/her employed experience

GI has their own internal online training tool, but they also organise onsite trainings. They identify the needs of the employee through a continuous evaluation. Later they present the findings to the HR department and together plan the actions to be carried out. Once a year they have what they call a Talent Review where Managers evaluate the performance of each one of their employees under them, and they analyse the training needs of the employees in order to develop their professional development. In recent years GI has fostered employees’ initiative, GI promotes the curiosity of their employees and they have the power to look for tools or specific

trainings for their personal development. Guardian Industries has a programme called Health Guard that promotes the healthy style of their employees through healthy food and sport activities, fruits, water, coffee and tea.

They have realised that it is possible to implement remote working practices for employees from different departments through virtual reality or other methods, which, previously, was unthinkable. In the factories they have created coffee corners where employees can have a rest encouraging a different work environment. These areas were very well received. In the Headquarters GI have designed a comfortable canteen with terrace. And two years ago they opened a recreational area where employees have books, ping pong, darts, PlayStation.

Concept 2

Processes of understanding and responding to the needs of workers to optimise redeployment within the same company

Once a year GI undertakes the 360 review of their employees. For each employee they collect the feedbacks of the supervisor, the employees under their supervision and other employees. This process is just performed with the 35% of factories' operators.

The company has a personalized employee career procedure in which the employee's supervisor plays a critical role. There is day-to-day communication between the employee and their supervisor in small monthly meetings, where solutions can be found and actions are taken regarding the employee's career. Also As a multinational company, they post internal vacancies and any employee can apply for vacant positions without informing their supervisor.

HR emphasizes the Company Culture in all countries, but regarding the management of employee training, a large number of training is offered to its employees, who are the ones who decide what training they need.

Concept 3

Supporting the reintegration of a worker so he/she, following a period of leave (short/long term) can continue to be employed in his/her original function or in a new role within the same company

GI has a common guide that covers the reintegration process. The guide emphasises that during the first weeks the level of support from the supervisor has to be increased. Everything is changing so rapidly that this support is much-needed. Also, they have a very powerful intranet with a huge amount of information. During the leave employees still have access to the intranet and they decide when and how they want to communicate through the intranet. GI always do a detailed monitoring

of the employee during their leave. In addition to the intranet, they also keep direct contact with the employee through the HR department, the supervisor or the corresponding medical body. According to the specific needs of the employee they prepare the reintegration of the employee.

Concept 4

The mentorship of a worker who is considering leaving the company (e.g. due to retirement, or the completion of a project) to apply their skill-set in a different role within the company (e.g. proactive use of skill set prior to retirement, or re-orient skill set to a new project)

One of the main principles of the company is the personal transformation of the employee, so they do not become obsolete for other positions or even for the current position. The company supports the curiosity and entrepreneurship of the employee. Employees have sufficient time to conduct an international training course and they are the ones that decide the specific course that they need. Personal concerns are one of the most important values of the company and they foster them as much as possible. 70% of the job vacancies are covered by internal promotion.

Concept 5

Categorising the skill set of workers with a view to planning and implementation of worker-centred strategies that optimise the categorised skills sets within a company ecosystem

Both informal and formal trainings are promoted. The company is very much concerned about the fact that employee do not become “obsolete” in their current capacities. The company allows time to the employee to get new training that is of interest to the employee. The training can be provided by the company itself, the employee can also request or propose a training to develop new skills.

For the evaluation, the company also has formal and informal processes. From an informal assessment of progress in skills, the employee has continuous communication with their supervisor.

Based on a formal process, two internal evaluation processes are carried out: a 360 evaluation and a talent evaluation.

Concept 6

The prioritisation of human centred optimisation over contractual obligation

For the company, the most important thing are personal and individual concerns, the company allows employees to develop individually, promoting intrapreneurship, as well as at a collective level through a healthy company culture, through constant employee communication with a supervisor who in turn serves as mentor for the employee, valuing not only work but also the skills and needs of the employee.

Concept 7

Supporting the transition of a worker into the external job market where a worker is no longer meeting the requirements of their current contractual obligations

In GI, communication is the most important thing, when an employee must leave the company an effective communication is established between the company and the worker, where they are informed of all the reasons of their dismissal and all the options.

The accompaniment until their departure is absolute, and whenever the conditions are met and the employee needs it, good references will be provided to facilitate their search for a new job.