

# THE ROLE OF HRM IN ORGANIZATIONS IMPLEMENTING AGILE METHODOLOGIES

**Danijela Parojčić**

University "MB", Serbia  
[danijelaparojic@gmail.com](mailto:danijelaparojic@gmail.com)

**Milan Stamatović**

University "MB", Serbia  
[drstamatovicm@gmail.com](mailto:drstamatovicm@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *In today's dynamic business environment, the role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in organizations implementing agile methodologies is becoming crucial for gaining competitive advantage. Agility enables organizations to rapidly adapt to change, foster innovation, and efficiently manage teams, while HRM plays a central role in facilitating these processes. This paper analyzes how HRM can support the implementation of agile practices through the development and application of strategies that enhance team dynamics, collaboration, and innovation. HRM must adapt to new challenges and methodologies by providing support to agile teams through personalized training, skills development, and enabling flexible working conditions. In organizations adopting agile approaches, HRM is responsible for developing and implementing strategies that foster a collaborative culture and promote continuous innovation. The application of agile methods in HRM involves leveraging digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI) to analyze employee data, predict future skill requirements, and accelerate recruitment and selection processes. Agile organizations also utilize cloud technologies that enable remote work, seamless collaboration, and efficient team management regardless of geographic location. This flexibility enhances organizational resilience and responsiveness to market demands. While technology provides significant advantages, the implementation of agile methods in HRM also faces challenges, including resistance to change, the need for continuous learning and adaptation by HR teams, and the preservation of organizational culture. Despite these challenges, agility in HRM allows organizations to effectively respond to dynamic changes and ensure successful operations in competitive environments.*

**Keywords:** *agility, HRM, innovation, team dynamics.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern business environment, which is characterized by accelerated digitization, globalization and unpredictable market changes, organizations face the challenge of remaining competitive, flexible and able to quickly react to new situations. Agility has become a key feature that allows organizations to effectively respond to these challenges, and human resource management (HRM) has a central role in its implementation. By using agile methods, HRM enables organizations to manage talent, improve team dynamics and improve the ability to quickly adapt to circumstances that require immediate reactions, such as crisis situations or unplanned events. The agreement between agility and artificial intelligence (AI) is also a key advantage in HRM. AI can significantly improve organizational agility by automating administrative processes, accelerating selection and recruitment, and analyzing employee performance, thereby enabling HR teams to focus on strategic aspects of the organization. Using AI tools for data analysis also enables the prediction of required skills and personalized development of employees, which improves their preparedness for changes

in the market. Agile teams, characterized by speed of adaptation, high cooperation, autonomy and responsibility, directly influence organizational processes. With the support of digital tools and agile methods, these teams can quickly reorganize and reallocate resources according to new priorities, thus increasing their efficiency and productivity. Innovations such as AI-driven employee satisfaction analysis tools, gamification and engagement platforms can significantly improve motivation, productivity and the learning process within an organization. The introduction of agile methods and innovations in HRM is not only a strategic decision that increases operational efficiency, but is also a key factor in building the organization's competitiveness on the market. The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the role of HRM in the implementation of agile methods, through the analysis of contemporary practices and challenges.

## **2. AGILITY OF ORGANIZATIONS**

Organizational agility and human resource management (HRM) are important factors for successful adaptation to changes in the modern business environment and as an approach enables organizations to be flexible, quickly react to market changes and effectively manage talent. We say that organizations are agile when they are able to quickly adapt to changes, innovate and respond to market demands through flexible processes, structures and work culture.

Agile HRM adapts traditional HR practices to enable greater flexibility and improve employee engagement. Key features of agile HRM are:

- Flexible workforce management includes hiring temporary and project-oriented teams instead of a strict hierarchical structure, with an accelerated hiring process and dynamic adaptation of skills to the organization's requirements.
- The development of employees in the iterative model is based on continuous learning through short formats, targeted trainings and mentoring support, where the emphasis is placed on regular feedback and not on annual performance evaluations.
- The increased involvement of employees in decision-making implies the reduction of administrative obstacles, which encourages autonomy in work, with the application of team cooperation and agile approaches such as Scrum and Kanban.
- The effectiveness of the candidate selection process is improved by the application of digital technologies and artificial intelligence for data analysis, with a special emphasis on the assessment of skills and the candidate's fit with the organizational culture.
- Building an agile organizational culture includes strengthening mutual trust, open communication and willingness to experiment, while directing HR practices towards increasing employee motivation and satisfaction.

Research on agility and human resource management (HRM) shows that the application of agile principles in HR contributes to greater flexibility, faster response to changes and greater employee satisfaction. I will give a few examples:

### **1. The difference between traditional and agile HR in the recruitment process**

- With the traditional approach, companies, especially those in the automotive sector, used long and bureaucratic selection processes that could last up to three months, with clearly defined job descriptions and approvals that went through multiple levels of hierarchy.
- The agile approach was applied, e.g. ING Bank which transformed its HR recruitment process by implementing "scrum" teams and cyclical selection processes. Every 14 days, the teams analyzed incoming candidates, using A/B testing of ads and working closely with the relevant hiring departments (Bersin, 2018).

The result of the introduction of an agile approach allowed the average time of employment to be reduced from 63 to 23 days, with a significant increase in candidate satisfaction.

## 2. Differences between standard training and agile learning in employee development

- In traditional HR models, training is usually planned on an annual basis and is often out of step with the rapid changes in the industry.
- Spotify applied an agile approach by applying the concept of "learning squads" – small teams that choose the areas in which they want to improve themselves, with regular feedback and exchange of knowledge within the organization (Denning, 2018).
- The result of introducing an agile approach is a higher level of employee engagement and faster application of acquired skills in daily business tasks.

## 3. The difference between annual evaluation and continuous feedback through performance evaluation

- In the traditional approach, classic performance evaluation is conducted once a year, often without concrete value for employees or managers.
- By introducing an agile approach, Adobe abolished annual evaluations and introduced a system of "check-in" meetings - regular informal conversations between managers and employees about goals, performance and development.

The result of agility is a 30% reduction in employee turnover and an increase in team engagement (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016).

## 4. Differences between hierarchical and agile structures in HR when we talk about the organizational structure

- In the traditional model, people management goes vertically, which means from strategy to operations, with many layers of approval.
- By introducing the agile model "network of teams" - smaller, multidisciplinary units in the HR sector, Unilever enabled tasks such as leadership development and employment to be solved independently through them.

The result of this agile approach is faster decision-making, better adaptability and greater cooperation with other parts of the organization.

## 5. The difference between passive support and an agile partner when it comes to the role of HR in changes

- In classic organizational models, HR has the role of an administrative department that provides logistical support during the change process.
- At Bosch, HR teams that have introduced agile models are actively involved in digital transformation processes, where they act as facilitators of change and encourage the development of a growth mindset through joint workshops and interactive activities (Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015).

The result of this agility is a more effective implementation of changes and a stronger rooting of an innovative culture within the organization.

Accelerated digitization and the emergence of artificial intelligence have changed a lot in the business of organizations, which has also affected their agility. These changes bring numerous advantages, but also challenges. Although there are certain drawbacks, digitization and AI have become an integral part of modern business. Organizations that are more flexible and ready to react quickly to changes become more resilient to future crises and various other challenges.

Artificial intelligence, for example, brings significant help in business through assistants who work around the clock and are always ready to help, facilitate business processes and obtain the necessary information crucial for decision-making. This type of support enables organizations to improve efficiency, reduce human error and improve strategies based on real-time data. A few important areas where these technologies have impacted agility (Table 1):

Area of influence	Impact description
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Faster data analysis and decision-making	Artificial intelligence enables HR teams to analyze data and make decisions faster, thus reducing reaction time to changes. Predictive analytics enables timely recognition of new skills needs and recruitment planning.
Automation of HR tasks with chatbots and virtual assistants	Chatbots and virtual assistants automate HR tasks, enable faster and more efficient communication with employees and candidates, reducing the administrative burden. In recruitment, AI analyzes resumes and skills to speed up the selection process.
Personalized training based on AI	AI-based digital and agile training enables personalized learning, and VR and AR technologies enable simulated training, reducing costs and risks.
Flexible working and remote team management	Digital platforms and cloud technologies enable flexible work and effective management of remote teams, accelerating the formation of teams and the adaptability of organizations.
Employee satisfaction analytics and gamification	Advanced analytics uses AI to process feedback and identify challenges, while gamification motivates employees and tracks engagement through personalized tasks.

*Table No. 1 - Impact of artificial intelligence on agility in HRM Source: Davenport, T. H. (2022)*

The development of modern technologies raises the question of how organizations and the human resource management function managed to function and be flexible in the period before their application. In the past, companies relied on classic methods such as manual management, long-term planning and direct communication, which allowed a certain degree of adaptability, but were not fast and efficient enough in an increasingly complex business environment. With the introduction of artificial intelligence, digital solutions and automation, organizations have significantly improved their ability to react quickly, adapt and optimally manage their human capital.

These modern technologies accelerate decision-making, hiring, employee development and engagement processes, enabling a level of agility that was previously difficult to achieve. However, the implementation of agile approaches in HRM is not without challenges. Organizations often face resistance to change, the need for continuous education of HR professionals to work with new technologies, as well as difficulties in preserving organizational culture. Additionally, balancing agile methods and traditional structures remains a challenge for many companies that have not yet fully transformed. Nevertheless, agility becomes necessary to successfully adapt to turbulent market conditions and build a long-term competitive advantage.

### **3. THE ROLE OF HRM IN ORGANIZATIONS THAT APPLY AGILE METHODS**

Human resource management in agile organizations plays a key role in ensuring flexibility, innovation and operational efficiency. The rise of agile methodologies, based on iterative processes, rapid adaptation and teamwork of different experts, is significantly transforming traditional HR approaches. In this context, modern HR focuses on creating a stimulating work environment, fast and open communication, as well as continuous adaptation to market requirements and employee needs (Dikert et al., 2016).

While classic HR models rested on rigid hierarchies and static procedures for recruiting, developing and evaluating staff, agile approaches introduce more flexible strategies that include personalized development plans and continuous performance monitoring (Denning, 2018). In this framework, the role of the HR sector is evolving - from an administrative function to a strategic partner that actively contributes to the shaping of organizational culture and the development of team agility (Rigby et al., 2016).

In agile organizations, teams function with a high degree of autonomy and make decisions decentralized, which enables faster adaptation and greater responsibility of individuals. In this context, HR management has a significant role in supporting this way of working - through the careful selection of candidates who are flexible, willing to cooperate and ready to learn. HR also actively participates in the development of employee competencies that are key to working in agile teams, as well as in establishing a system of continuous development and adaptation to changes (Highsmith, 2013).

By applying agile frameworks like Scrum and Kanban, HR contributes to the organization of more efficient work processes, better team communication and an increased level of employee engagement, which is directly reflected in productivity and job satisfaction (Serrador & Pinto, 2015).

Significant aspects of human resource management in agile organizations:

- Selection and recruitment in agile organizations apply flexible candidate assessment models, including task simulations, teamwork assessments and iterative interviews. This approach enables HRM to ensure the rapid and efficient integration of new members into dynamic team structures (Hoda et al., 2018).
- Employee development and training focuses on continuous learning, with an emphasis on personalized learning plans, micro-learning and the use of digital platforms to improve skills. With this approach, HRM enables employees to follow innovations and quickly master new competencies (Bersin et al., 2017).
- Performance management in an agile environment focuses on continuous feedback, rather than annual evaluations. HRM uses techniques such as sprint retrospectives, peer review systems and agile evaluation models to continuously improve work performance (Moe et al., 2010).
- The motivation and engagement of employees is achieved by methods that encourage internal motivation, such as autonomy, the meaning of work and the development of competences. Flexible work models, transparent communication structures and recognition for team contributions enable high levels of employee engagement and satisfaction (Pink, 2009).
- Team dynamics and a culture of innovation become key components of agile HRM, which promotes an organizational culture based on experimentation, rapid adaptation and collaboration. Through the facilitation of team workshops, agile ceremonies, and the use of digital tools for collaboration, HRM helps teams quickly adapt to change and promote innovation (Denning, 2018).

The implementation of agile HRM enables organizations to improve their competitiveness through more effective human resource management. By developing flexible and collaborative work environments, HRM becomes a key factor in fostering change and

innovation, which leads to increased organizational agility and greater resilience to market challenges (Rigby et al., 2016).

#### **4. TEAM DYNAMICS**

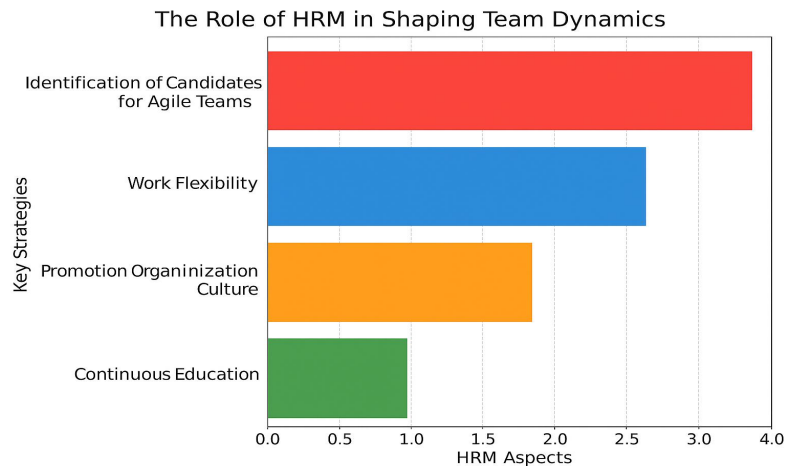
Team dynamics includes interactions between team members, their mutual relationships, communication, coordination and the ability to work together to achieve set goals. It is aimed at harmonizing the individual skills, experiences and characteristics of each member in order to achieve high efficiency and team success. Optimizing team dynamics becomes crucial in modern organizations that strive for innovation and competitiveness.

Research in the field of team dynamics indicates several key factors that significantly influence the efficiency and success of teams, the main findings are:

- Open and effective communication among team members is key to achieving common goals. Research shows that teams with transparent communication processes achieve better results, because they enable quick information exchange, conflict resolution and mutual support (Hinds, Liu, & Lyon, 2011).
- Trust among team members creates the basis for successful cooperation. Teams with a high degree of trust solve problems and make decisions more effectively, because team members feel more secure in mutual support (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2014).
- Teams with clearly defined goals and responsibilities function better and achieve better results. Lack of clear division of tasks can lead to disagreements and reduced productivity (Salas, Dickinson, Converse, & Tannenbaum, 2004).
- While there may be communication challenges, diversity in a team, whether it's different skills, experiences or perspectives, often contributes to greater creativity and innovation. Diverse teams often produce better and more innovative solutions (Mannix & Neale, 2005).
- Strong connection and motivation of team members significantly improves their work. Motivated teams with a common goal and mutual support often achieve better results, even in difficult circumstances (Mullen & Copper, 1994).
- An effective leader plays a key role in team dynamics. Leaders who provide clear team direction, help resolve conflict, and balance autonomy and coordination can significantly increase team productivity (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001).
- Teams that quickly adapt to changes and new challenges tend to be more successful. Agile teams that use iterative processes and rapidly test ideas achieve better results, especially in dynamic environments (Highsmith, 2010).

Agility can significantly improve team dynamics by enabling quick adaptation and flexibility in solving challenges. By using agile methodologies like Scrum and Kanban, teams are able to quickly react to changes in the environment, learning from previous experiences through iterative processes and continuous retrospectives. These methods improve the team's ability to adapt to new challenges. Agile methodologies enable rapid reorganization of teams, flexible deployment of resources and accelerated decision-making, which further contributes to the improvement of team dynamics. In that process, HRM has a key role, because it must provide appropriate training, resources and support to employees in the process of adapting to new ways of working.

Human resource management plays a key role in shaping team dynamics through the following aspects (Chart 1)



*Chart 1 – The role of HRM in shaping team dynamics Source: Tuckman, (1965)*

Although the application of agile methodologies and efficient management of human resources significantly contributes to strengthening team dynamics, organizations face several challenges that can threaten the success of teams:

- Employees often show resistance to new work methods, which can hinder their ability to adapt quickly, reducing productivity and increasing frustration among team members.
- Lack of clear and open communication can lead to misunderstandings, reduced trust and poor coordination among team members, which negatively affects the overall efficiency and success of the team.
- If the team's goals are not in line with the organizational goals or are not clearly defined enough, there may be conflicts between team members and reduced engagement, which reduces team cohesion.
- Without proper management support through the provision of resources, training and motivation, teamwork can become ineffective, which negatively affects team dynamics and goal achievement.

Team dynamics is a key success factor in modern organizations, especially those that apply agile approaches. Human resource management has an important role in encouraging and maintaining effective teamwork through continuous education, development of necessary competencies and implementation of strategies that promote joint work and innovation. Agile principles allow teams to quickly adapt to market changes, but their implementation can be difficult due to employee resistance and lack of adequate resources. Through the strategic approach of HR management, it is possible to improve team cohesion, strengthen the organization's resistance to change and preserve its competitive advantage.

## 5. INNOVATIONS

Innovations in the framework of agility, human resources and team cooperation are becoming increasingly important drivers of improving business processes in modern organizations. In an increasingly unstable and technology-driven business environment, especially with the growing application of artificial intelligence (AI), innovative approaches not only contribute to greater operational efficiency, but also encourage the continuous professional development of employees. Agile organizations have the ability to quickly adapt to changes in the market, which allows for greater alignment between market needs and professional development programs. In the context of HRM, agility means proactively responding to the needs of employees, recognizing their abilities and providing opportunities for continuous learning and progress in changing business conditions (Senge, 1990; Klein, 2003).

Teamwork is one of the basic pillars of organizational success, and its improvement requires the application of modern and innovative approaches that strengthen cooperation, creative thinking and mutual trust among team members. Key team competencies – such as trust, constructive conflict resolution and collective decision-making – enable teams to effectively overcome obstacles and contribute to the achievement of strategic goals. Innovations in the field of teamwork imply the implementation of modern digital tools and methodologies that improve mutual communication and team coordination, which is especially important in the context of remote teams and flexible work (Lencioni, 2002; Tuckman & Jensen, 1977).

The introduction of innovations in human resource management and teamwork increasingly includes the application of artificial intelligence (AI) to support decision-making and process optimization. AI contributes through data analysis and automation, but the human factor remains crucial through empathy, creativity and moral reasoning. In this sense, HR professionals use AI to improve the processes of candidate selection, performance evaluation and identification of potential among employees, but key decisions still remain in the domain of human judgment (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014).

The development of innovations in the field of human resource management and internal communication increasingly depends on technological progress, but also on the capacity of organizations to preserve key human qualities such as creativity and intuition. Technologies such as artificial intelligence and sophisticated analytical systems are already changing the way modern organizations function, introducing more efficient processes. However, they simultaneously raise important questions about the boundary between automation and the preservation of human innovation, which remains crucial for long-term success.

While technology may seem to be taking over many aspects of business processes – from data analysis to decision making – innovation will continue to be the foundation of human creativity, imagination and the ability to see the bigger picture. The human factor will be crucial, as machines cannot replicate the complexity of human emotions, intuition and ability to combine different ideas and contexts in new and useful ways. That being said, man will always be innovative, but it will depend on how technology is used.

It is very important that technology is used as a tool to support innovation, not as a substitute for human input. If there is too much reliance on AI and automated systems, there is a risk that people's ability to develop new ideas and think critically will be reduced. Given this, HRM in the future must carefully balance between using technology and preserving space for human creativity and emotional intelligence.

It is necessary for HRM to create a culture that encourages learning, experimentation and collaboration, which implies, above all, the introduction of educational programs that allow employees not to rely too much on technology, but to develop their abilities for creative problem solving, decision-making and collaboration. HRM should also promote the active use of emotional intelligence in teamwork, because only through interpersonal connection and understanding can a team come up with truly innovative solutions.

Directions that HRM should follow to make teams more innovative:

1. Human resource management should promote a culture of continuous improvement through mentoring, team sessions and digital learning platforms. Such forms of support allow employees to develop their own innovative capacities, without relying solely on technology when making decisions. Innovations most often occur in dynamic environments that foster adaptability and openness to new knowledge (Senge, 1990; Garvin, 1993).
2. HR management should provide physical and virtual spaces where employees can freely explore, experiment and exchange ideas. Such an environment enables the creation of a creative atmosphere, reduces the fear of failure and encourages collaborative problem solving (Amabile, 1998; Edmondson, 1999).

3. Investing in programs that develop emotional intelligence and interpersonal communication skills contributes to better cooperation among employees, greater mutual trust and better conflict resolution. High EQ of employees is associated with greater acceptance of changes and more active participation in innovation processes (Goleman, 2006; Boyatzis, 2008).
4. HR should establish strategies that clearly define when technology, such as artificial intelligence, is useful as a tool to support innovation, and when it is necessary to rely on human creativity and analytical thinking. Technology should complement, not replace, human input (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Davenport & Ronanki, 2018).
5. Organizations should develop systems that value originality, reward initiatives and encourage employees to step out of their comfort zone. Such a culture recognizes the effort and courage to experiment, even when the results are not immediately visible (Tushman & O'Reilly, 1997; McKinsey & Company, 2020).

Although technology is advancing rapidly, the key strength of organizations will still be in their employees, their ability to generate new ideas and adapt to new circumstances. HRM in the future should create a balance between innovations brought by technology and preservation of human values such as creativity, interpersonal connection and emotional intelligence. By investing in continuous employee development, creating space for creativity and innovation, and using technology as a support tool, HRM can help organizations stay competitive and lead in rapidly changing industries.

Innovative approaches in employee training and development increasingly include the development of emotional skills - such as the ability to manage one's own emotions, understand the emotions of others and build empathic relationships. These skills are of great importance for team cooperation and conflict resolution, because they enable stable and constructive interpersonal communication, which is necessary for the achievement of common goals (Goleman, 2006).

Implementing systems that encourage innovation and creative thinking allows organizations to develop an environment in which employees freely express ideas and test new approaches. Through the creation of creative workspaces and the introduction of flexible working conditions, employees are given the opportunity to make maximum use of their knowledge, skills and intuition. Artificial intelligence can play a supporting role in this process, providing relevant analysis and guidance, but initial creativity and innovative solutions still remain the domain of human thinking (Amabile, 1998; McKinsey & Company, 2020).

## 6. CONCLUSION

In today's fast-changing business environment, organizations that want to maintain competitive advantage and long-term sustainability must develop agile strategies that enable rapid adaptation to changes and unexpected challenges. Human resource management (HRM) plays a key role in this transformation, as it uses agile approaches to effectively manage talent, improve team relationships and build organizational resilience. The introduction of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, can further improve HRM agility by automating administrative tasks and enabling personalized approaches to employee development. However, the success of agile organizations depends on achieving a balance between technology and human resources. HRM should ensure that technology serves as a tool to enhance human potential, not as a substitute for creativity and interpersonal skills. Creating space for innovation, constantly investing in employee development and creating a culture that supports creativity are key factors for maintaining competitiveness in the market. In the future, organizations that successfully integrate digital tools and human values will have an advantage in quickly adapting to market changes, fostering innovation and achieving long-

term success. Just as organizations invest in technological innovation, it is equally important to invest in developing emotional literacy and human flexibility. The future of innovation will depend not only on algorithms, but also on the ability of people to use them with purpose, responsibility and creativity.

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