

# Starting again from people

the contribution of Occupational Psychology, of Organizations and Human Resources

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# CRITICAL POINTS OF PRE-COVID WORK

- massive use of information and communication technologies;
- increasing automation and digitalisation of production (which often lead to work intensification and mental overload);
- globalization of economy and its persistent dominant role in the definition of the criteria for social and work policies;
- applying methods to organize and rationalize work, focusing on reducing costs (rather than bringing innovation) and especially on people's needs (for example, think about the way companies reorganize and downsize work and the massive increase in outsourcing and subcontracting);

# CRITICAL POINTS OF PRE-COVID WORK

- the ever-changing framework of labor-force, connected to demographic transformation, emigration, cultural and social differences such as generation gap, ethnicity, religion;
- the widespread “forced flexibility”, expressed in temporary and precarious employment contracts (which translates into a weakening of job security, especially for low-skilled people);
- the constant uncertainties and income differences, which increase the inequalities of opportunities in planning a personal future (especially, but not only, for the youngest);
- the growth of structural unemployment and intermittent “short-term” forms of employment, resulting in lower chances of building consistent and satisfying career paths;
- the growing difficulties of engagement for workers in organizational frameworks which are unable to combine productivity, safety and well-being for people.

# CRITICAL POINTS OF PRE-COVID WORK

- the massive use of virtual ways of working (with fewer opportunities for interpersonal relationships and socialization) and moving jobs to places that create less identity than in the past (think of the widespread use of teleworking);
- the persistent distance between training procedures and the needs of the world of work (with the simultaneous presence of unsatisfied job offers and overqualification phenomena);
- the growing demand for new skills, as the insistent demand for emotional and relational skills (although often described superficially and with reference to not-scientific constructs) is added to the cognitive ones, to adapt to rapid organizational change;
- the transformations of the meaning and value of work for people, today more and more often treated as relative in comparison to the needs and projects of individual life (with widespread expectations of work-life balance);

# THE STRENGTH OF DATA

Méda D. (2016). ***The future of work: The meaning and value of work in Europe***, Research Paper No. 18, Geneva, ILO;

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Eurofound (2015), ***New forms of employment***, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

World Economic Forum (2018) ***The Future of Jobs Report***. Geneva, Centre for the New Economy and Society,  
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UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2014). ***The Future of Work, Jobs and Skills in 2030. Evidence Report***, London, UKCES, 1-198, <http://yourfuturejob.ukces.org.uk>

Bollier D. (2011). ***The Future of Work. What It Means for Individuals, Businesses, Markets and Governments***,  
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*between present  
and future*

## THE EFFECTS OF PANDEMIC ON PEOPLE

*and maybe war  
as well*

In summary the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been profound over life conditions of people, activating deep and multiform reactions of psycho-social discomfort and also strong concerns due to the fear of being unable to realize personal, social and work projects. In many cases the biggest fear is the inability to keep or recover the usual levels of economic subsistence, of work security (and respect of security policies), of an adequate recognition of your skills and, last but not least, satisfying social interaction on workplaces

**ILO** (2020) Managing work-related psycho-social risks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Eurofound** (2021), Living and working in Europe 2020.

# AREAS OF INTERVENTION AND CONTRIBUTION OF LABOR PSYCHOLOGY, ORGANIZATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

As we set up a post-emergency phase that should facilitate the "transition to a new normal", it is really important to:

- a) focus attention on the need to adapt (or even transform) the ways to organize and realize work performances, with reference to the criteria of people's health and work safety;
- b) implement initiatives and support services that will involve people in the self-management of the restart process and will make them the main actors in the changes that are necessary to improve their work and life situations.

ALL OF THIS GIVES LIFE TO MANY AREAS OF INTERVENTION, OF WHICH WE PRESENT A SELECTION, IN TERMS OF REQUESTS FOR CHANGE IN DIFFERENT SOCIAL CONTEXTS

# A CHANGE REQUEST

In the post-pandemic situation, showing high risks of job insecurity, how is it possible to take charge of people, promote their professional integration into decent work, oppose the discouragement and disillusionment of many (especially young people) and their negative perceptions of the job market?

**ACTIVE AND PASSIVE LABOR POLICIES: INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION.**

- This refers to the renewal of the most relevant income support institutions (e.g. redundancy fund, mobility allowance, NAspl - New Social Insurance for Employees - etc ...)
- their necessary and better integration with active labor policies focused on training, orientation and job placement.

## **This should guarantee:**

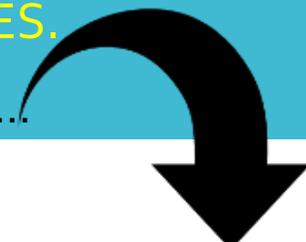
- better homogeneity all over the national territory,
- facilitating cooperation between public and private entities,
- encouraging a more direct involvement of businesses and work offer to all citizens, and in particular to the most vulnerable workers,
- opportunities for orientation, skills enhancement and employability improvement
- thus overcoming the widespread risks of dependence on forms of emergency assistance.

# A CHANGE REQUEST

How to make sure that people can be supported for a short period (not only in financial terms) and then place / re-propose themselves in the job market with a personal professional project consistent with the context, enhancing their skills and the feeling of self-efficacy in looking for a job?

INNOVATIVE SERVICES FOR COMPANIES.

AND ALSO ...



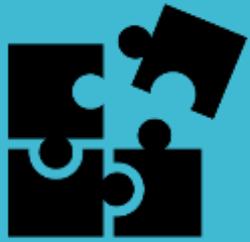
- **Advising people**

Activities such as listening desks, counseling, psychological support, etc. with the purpose of supporting / developing anyone (also functional for executives) for a 'personalized' intervention of emotional and cognitive support or to improve personal resources, in order to improve organizational well-being.

- **Organizational advice for management:**

Activities such as advice, coaching, support, tutoring, training, supervision in any form (training, research-intervention, monitoring and assessment, etc.) in order to reinforce and develop change management skills in the emerging context, planned to design-redesign frameworks and/or organization methods, leadership styles and the most suitable organizational communication forms, for a better psycho-social environment and especially in order to inspire participation and constructive attitude of workers during change process.

# A CHANGE REQUEST



- Strategic advice to institutions and stakeholder representatives (social partners and professional associations) in order to provide, on the basis of psycho-social expertise, models of analysis, data processing, interpretative models, guidelines for action.

Consultancy to implement participatory approaches, suitable for carrying out monitoring of new occupational stress risks (such as the emerging techno-stress) and for the application of preventive and corrective measures. This is done both by cooperating with the MC and in partnership with all the corporate security figures for the promotion of safe behaviors, also by assuming RSPP roles.

# A CHANGE REQUEST



- Consultancy for a worker-oriented work analysis aimed both at remodeling work spaces and workstations, schedules, shifts and specific production processes and at the development of adaptive behaviors and people's skills.
- Consultancy to improve forms of incentive and / or performance evaluation, aimed at the psycho-social sustainability of times, roles and tasks, through intervention models, built through internal investigations in the organization to involve and listen to workers.
- Consultancy to implement company policies aimed at fairness, respect for differences, prevention of aggression and harassment and containment of stereotypes and prejudices.

# A CHANGE REQUEST

How can we oppose the severe employment crisis by helping both the demand and supply of work?

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

### FOR COMPANIES:

- Correct job design to facilitate the relocation of the most “fragile” workers.
- Designing new and valid methods and tools for pre-selection.
- Defining communication and marketing strategies for employment services.

### FOR PEOPLE looking for a job, for the unemployed and people in reallocation:

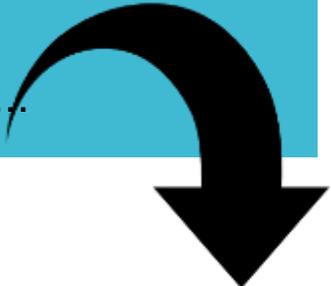
- Design and verification of devices for a correct "profiling" of users.
- Professional guidance and advice on life design.
- Career counseling paths.
- Skills assessment paths.
- Assessment paths
- Development paths (Development center)
- Work support paths.

# A CHANGE REQUEST

How can we help those looking for work (especially the most vulnerable), but also the system of employment services, too often inadequate for the market demands?

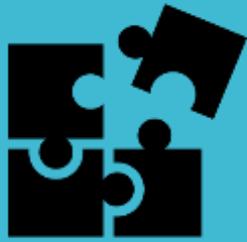
**INTEGRATED ORIENTATION SYSTEM ALONG THE ARC OF ACTIVE LIFE**

AND MUCH MORE...



- overcome the traditional dichotomy between school and professional guidance and its marginality both in the school and training system and in the work one;
- continuously provide guidance services making them accessible to people in the various stages of their development, according to the perspective of life-long learning
- create the conditions for a better exchange between guidance and training systems, to facilitate the reinforcement of the psycho-social resources necessary to face, or even help prevent, the numerous changes affecting people's lives (school - university; university-work; vocational training - work; work-work; work-unemployment; return to work) and for people's self-regulation of their own life plans.

# A CHANGE REQUEST



Even lacking systematic reforms, orientation plans and projects are possible, especially at a local level, involving educational and training institutions, local authorities, private and public companies.

This is the direction we are taking with the experiences that are activating:

- universalistic and early orientation programs at every school and educational levels (with an informative, formative nature)
- personalized programs such as psycho-social counseling (guidance counseling, tutoring, mentoring, coaching) with an eye focused on the different forms of internship;
- targeted programs of re-orientation to choices and re-motivational for fragile categories (eg: NEET) and prevention of school / training dropout;
- customized programs for different categories of adults (unemployed, emigrants, disabled, etc.) in close connection with the employment services.

# A CHANGE REQUEST

How to affect the modernization of the Public Administration, helping the competitiveness of the Country System?

**PSYCHO-SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND REFORM OF THE P.A.**

- Analysis of training needs and implementation of consequent training activities.
- Organizational well-being analysis (intended as an enabling condition for performance), assessment and management of psycho-social risks, typical of public work.
- Evaluation of organizational and professional behaviors and performances
- User satisfaction rating.
- Development of internal and external communication and organization activities.
- The methods for implementing the Organizational Plan for Agile Work (POLA) - as well as the monitoring of the implementation of smart working (training of staff and managers, verification of results, guidelines for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of services and administration ).
- The definition and implementation, while planning the competitive state exams, of the skills you need to access the roles and for the evaluation systems.

# FINAL CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) might be considered a crucial tool for the post-pandemic recovery of the country system and support in the current war.

We would lose an opportunity if the PNRR were limited to providing structural resources for the implementation of interventions aimed at solving economic problems, instead, it should be a tool that makes it possible to recommend a change of pace in the difficult relationship that binds people to their work in our country. An opportunity to face in a systemic and not exclusively reactive way the contrast that develops between the production needs (and the achievement of evident results) and the existential needs of each worker.

THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION

We have the ambition to work on the theme of coexistence and well-being, not only based on a "restorative" intervention perspective, but trying to act in a preventive and structural way, to anticipate the worst effects of critical issues, considered in fact impossible to avoid, at certain steps of the professional life of organizations. It is precisely the presence of these models of action, and their proven effectiveness, that makes us believe in the contribution of our discipline.