

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Proposals for improving human talent management at Portoparques EP in Ecuador

Propuestas de mejora para la gestión del talento humano en Portoparques EP en Ecuador

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**Abstract** The objective was to propose improvement strategies for human talent management at the public company Portoparques EP in order to strengthen institutional efficiency, staff motivation, and service quality. A mixed-methods approach was employed, using a quantitative component based on Likert-scale surveys administered to 30 employees. Semi-structured interviews revealed the absence of structured induction processes, effective feedback mechanisms, and internal coordination. The SWOT analysis identified significant weaknesses, including the lack of continuous training, non-standardized processes, and low motivation. Identified threats included talent loss and regulatory barriers to process reform. Three strategic proposals were developed: a Human Talent Professionalization Program, an Internal Process Optimization and Institutional Communication Plan, and a set of Organizational Strengthening Strategies. Each proposal includes activities, timelines, responsible parties, and evaluation indicators, and is aligned with the current legal framework. Their implementation is expected to increase employee satisfaction, reduce unplanned turnover, and improve public perception of the services provided by the institution.

**Keywords** human talent management, professionalization, performance evaluation, work climate, public sector, Portoparques EP.

**Resumen** El objetivo fue proponer estrategias de mejora para la gestión del talento humano en la empresa pública Portoparques EP para fortalecer la eficiencia institucional, motivación del personal y la calidad del servicio. Se empleó un enfoque mixto, utilizando un componente cuantitativo mediante encuestas tipo Likert aplicadas a 30 colaboradores. Las entrevistas semiestructuradas evidenciaron la ausencia de procesos estructurados de inducción, mecanismos efectivos de retroalimentación y coordinación interna. El análisis FODA identificó debilidades importantes, entre ellas la falta de capacitación continua, procesos no estandarizados y baja motivación. Entre las amenazas se encontraron la pérdida de talento y obstáculos normativos para la reforma de procesos. Se desarrollaron tres propuestas estratégicas: un Programa de Profesionalización del Talento Humano, un Plan de Optimización de Procesos Internos y Comunicación Institucional, y un conjunto de Estrategias de Fortalecimiento Organizacional. Cada propuesta incluye actividades, cronogramas, responsables e indicadores de evaluación, y se alinea con el marco legal vigente. La implementación debe incrementar la satisfacción, reducir la rotación no planificada y mejorar la percepción pública de los servicios brindados por la institución.

**Palabras clave** gestión del talento humano, profesionalización, evaluación del desempeño, clima laboral, sector público, Portoparques EP.

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## Introduction

Human talent management in public institutions is fundamental to achieving organizational objectives, ensuring service quality, and strengthening citizens' trust. In today's context of public-sector transformation—marked by increasing demands for efficiency, transparency, and institutional accountability—it is essential to reassess traditional personnel administration models and move toward more comprehensive, participatory strategies focused on competency development. Within this framework, the professionalization of human talent, strategic planning, and continuous process improvement become key components for ensuring sustainable organizational performance aligned with societal demands (Gandrita, 2023).

In recent years, Ecuadorian public administration has promoted a series of regulatory and technical reforms aimed at strengthening institutional capacity, including the implementation of instruments such as the Organic Law on Public Service (LOSEP), human resources management subsystems, and institutional development plans. Nevertheless, in many entities—especially those operating at the local level or recently established—structural and operational constraints persist that hinder the achievement of optimal performance levels. These include the absence of an integrated human talent planning framework, poorly structured induction processes, limited investment in continuous training, and a weak culture of evaluation and feedback (Al Aina & Atan, 2020).

Within this context is the Public Enterprise Portoparques EP, an entity attached to the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the canton of Portoviejo, whose mission is to manage, conserve, and promote recreational public spaces and natural areas within the canton. Despite having a formally defined structure and a technical team committed to management, the enterprise faces challenges related to the organization, coordination, and development of its human talent. Weaknesses in internal processes, limited systematization of roles, a restricted training offer, and the absence of formal mechanisms for performance evaluation, feedback, and interdepartmental communication have become factors that negatively affect the institution's overall performance and the public perception of the services it provides (Stang-Rabrig et al., 2023).

The relevance of this research lies in its capacity to provide concrete solutions to a challenge that is common across many public institutions, particularly at the local level. Beyond its direct usefulness for Portoparques EP, the findings and proposals presented here may be replicated or adapted to other entities with similar characteristics. In this way, the study contributes to strengthening the institutional capacity of the organization under analysis and supports the academic and technical debate on human talent management within Ecuador's public sector.

This research is guided by the objective of formulating improvement strategies for human talent management in the Public Enterprise Portoparques EP, with an emphasis on three core dimensions: institutional strengthening, staff professionalization, and service quality improvement. Building on this purpose, the study advances through the definition of specific objectives and the application of a rigorous methodology, which provides a sound technical basis for the proposed actions and positions their implementation as a tangible contribution to the organization's performance and sustainability.

## Methodology

The research adopted a mixed-methods approach (qualitative–quantitative) and a descriptive, non-experimental design, since no variables were manipulated. This approach made it possible to integrate an understanding of human-talent processes and perceptions—through interviews and documentary analysis—with systematized data collected via surveys.

The sample included employees holding active contracts during the data collection period, with a minimum tenure of six months in the institution, and who participated voluntarily by signing an informed consent form. These criteria ensured that the selected participants had sufficient experience in their roles and an informed understanding of the institutional context. The study excluded staff with less than six months of service, as well as those on extended leave, vacation, or official assignment at the time of the research. Employees who chose not to participate were also excluded, in accordance with ethical principles of confidentiality and voluntary participation.

A non-probabilistic, criterion-based sampling technique was applied, which involves the intentional selection of participants who meet specific characteristics aligned with the study objectives. In this case, 30 collaborators were selected from areas such as Human Talent, Administrative and Financial Management, Technology, Maintenance, Cemeteries, among others, ensuring representation of operational, technical, and administrative staff. This sampling strategy enabled access to informants with direct experience in institutional processes, thereby strengthening the validity of the diagnostic findings and the resulting proposals.

## Results and discussion

Table 1 presents Portoparques EP employees' perceptions regarding several aspects of human talent management. It reports the percentages of responses grouped into three categories—agree, disagree, and don't know/no response (DK/NR)—across six items: performance evaluation, institutional

induction, training opportunities, recognition of effort, work motivation, and internal communication. The data were obtained through a structured questionnaire comprising closed-ended Likert-type items, administered to a representative sample of administrative and operational staff as part of the diagnostic phase established under the first specific objective of this research.

**Table 1.** Staff perceptions regarding aspects of human talent management

Evaluated item	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	DK/NR (%)
There is objective performance evaluation	26,7	56,7	16,6
I received an induction upon joining	33,3	50,0	16,7
I have opportunities for technical training	30,0	60,0	10,0
My effort or work results are recognized	23,3	66,7	10,0
I feel motivated in my position	26,7	60,0	13,3
There is effective communication between my area and other departments	36,7	53,3	10,0

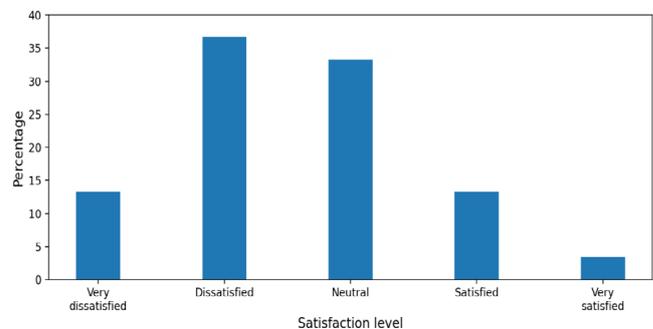
The results show a predominantly negative perception across all evaluated aspects. A total of 56.7% of respondents believe that there is no objective performance evaluation, while only 26.7% perceive otherwise. Similarly, 50.0% report not having received institutional induction upon entry, which reveals significant weaknesses in onboarding and job-orientation processes. Regarding technical training, 60.0% state that they do not have access to training opportunities, highlighting the absence of a structured professional development plan necessary to strengthen competencies and improve performance.

Another critical issue is the lack of recognition: 66.7% of participants consider that their effort or work results are not valued. This finding is directly related to the low level of motivation reported: only 26.7% indicated feeling motivated in their position, while 60.0% expressed the opposite. Although slightly less negative, 53.3% believe that there is no effective communication between their area and other departments, reflecting weaknesses in interdepartmental coordination and internal information flow.

Overall, human talent management within the institution shows substantial gaps in essential processes such as induction, evaluation, training, and recognition, which directly affect the work climate, staff motivation, and organizational efficiency. These findings—derived from descriptive

quantitative analysis—were consistent with the perceptions gathered through interviews and documentary analysis, and they support the need to implement improvement proposals aligned with the institutional strengthening and professionalization priorities defined in this research.

With respect to Figure 1, the results on employees’ overall satisfaction with human talent management at the Public Enterprise Portoparques EP show a predominantly unfavorable trend. A total of 13.3% of respondents reported being very dissatisfied (level 1), while 36.7% indicated they were dissatisfied (level 2), which represents the largest group. 33.3% of participants expressed a neutral or indifferent assessment (level 3), reflecting an intermediate perception. Only 13.3% reported being satisfied (level 4), and just 3.4% stated they were very satisfied (level 5).



**Figure 1.** Overall satisfaction with human talent management at Portoparques EP.

This scenario indicates that more than half of the staff hold a negative assessment of institutional management in this area, while fewer than one-fifth report being satisfied, which points to a low overall satisfaction level. These data support the diagnosis of weaknesses in key human talent processes—such as performance evaluation, induction, recognition, and internal communication—and justify the need to implement strategies aimed at improving the organizational climate, staff motivation, and internal efficiency.

The low level of overall satisfaction further underscores the need to adopt concrete actions to improve working conditions, optimize institutional human talent management, and strengthen employees’ perceptions of their organizational environment—issues that are addressed through the improvement proposals developed in this research.

Table 2 presents the qualitative findings derived from interviews conducted with six employees from different areas of the Public Enterprise Portoparques EP. This information complements and deepens the quantitative results, thereby fulfilling the study’s first specific objective, which focuses on a comprehensive diagnosis of human talent management within the institution.

**Table 2.** Emergent categories from the qualitative analysis

Category	Representative quote
Limited professionalization	Staff are only trained when there are emergencies or regulatory changes.
Weak induction	I did not receive a formal welcome; I learned the job ‘on the fly.’
Lack of feedback	We don’t know whether we are performing well. There is no clear evaluation or recognition.
Limited interdepartmental communication	Each unit does its own thing. There are no spaces to coordinate joint actions.

The results reveal four categories that point to significant organizational weaknesses. First, limited staff professionalization is identified, as training is provided only in urgent situations or to meet regulatory requirements, which prevents the sustained development of technical and transversal competencies. Second, weak institutional induction emerges, reflected in statements such as “I learned the job on the fly,” which indicate the absence of structured processes for welcoming, orienting, and socializing new staff.

A lack of organizational feedback is also evident: employees do not receive formal evaluations or recognition for their performance, which directly affects work motivation and constrains opportunities for continuous improvement. The category of limited interdepartmental communication refers to insufficient coordination across units, which hinders process alignment, institutional efficiency, and collaborative work.

These qualitative insights help explain, an internal and experiential perspective, the underlying causes of the weaknesses identified. Taken together, they provide inputs for the formulation of improvement proposals focused on professionalization, the redesign of internal processes, organizational communication, and institutional strengthening.

The results obtained in this research reveal an organizational landscape marked by serious limitations in human talent management processes, which aligns with previous studies highlighting the structural weakness of the human resources function in Ecuador’s public sector (Vitteri, 2021; Espinoza & Cachipuedno, 2024). The lack of objective performance evaluation, reported by 56.7% of surveyed staff, reflects a gap in the implementation of assessment models grounded in clear criteria and linked to results, which contradicts the guidelines established by LOSEP and the General Performance Evaluation Regulation (LOSEP, 2016). Likewise, the absence of formal induction, indicated by 50.0% of participants, confirms the lack of systematized processes for institutional welcome and socialization—widely addressed in the literature as a determining factor for organizational in-

tegration and role adaptation (Chiavenato, 2017; Noe, 2017).

Limited participation in training programs (60.0% reported not having received technical training) points to a reactive and unplanned model of staff professionalization, which hinders competency updating and organizational innovation (Al Jawali et al., 2022; Senge, 2006). The interviews reinforced this perception, noting that training occurs only to meet regulatory requirements or in emergency situations. These findings reveal a disconnect between human development functions and institutional strategy, contrary to the perspective advanced by Armstrong and Taylor (2023), who emphasize the need to align staff capabilities with organizational objectives.

Formal induction or “onboarding” programs are essential for integrating new public servants, although in the Latin American public sector they are often heterogeneous. It has been documented that effective induction—introducing organizational culture and expectations—increases employee commitment, productivity, and retention. In Latin America, most governments provide courses or initial training plans for new hires: 67% of countries have a standardized induction plan (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay), some of which are adapted according to hierarchical level. Another 33% applies differentiated induction based on tenure, and only 17% (Brazil and Jamaica) offers partial initial training to a limited group of selected employees.

Ongoing staff training is a core component of human talent management in the public sector. Recent studies in Latin America confirm that continuous training, together with performance recognition, are key elements for strengthening institutional effectiveness. In practice, Latin American countries have adopted broad training strategies; for example, 92% have developed online training to expand coverage, and 58% have a comprehensive training strategy applicable across government.

Priority areas include executive and digital skills, reflecting the global emphasis on 21st-century competencies. This focus is consistent with recommendations from international organizations. The OECD specifies that recruitment, continuous learning, and career development systems are “tools to build a workforce with the skills needed” to address challenges such as automation and demographic change. In Ecuador, professional literature also highlights the strategic role of continuous training, proposing a comprehensive approach spanning from recruitment to the ongoing updating of competencies.

## Conclusions

The three strategic proposals—professionalization, in-

ternal process optimization, and organizational strengthening—were formulated in direct response to the diagnosed weaknesses and are grounded in recognized continuous improvement and value-creation models, such as the Balanced Scorecard and people-centered management approaches. The Professionalization and Competency Development Program promotes a shift from isolated training actions to an institutionalized system of continuous learning, aligned with international recommendations that emphasize meritocracy and sustained capacity building in public service. The Institutional Process and Communication Optimization Plan prioritizes standardization, digitalization, and formal feedback mechanisms to enhance transparency, efficiency, and internal participation, while the organizational strengthening strategies incorporate participatory leadership and improvements to the work climate as key drivers of high-performing public-sector teams. Together, these initiatives address structural, cultural, and regulatory factors rather than superficial symptoms, highlighting the transformative potential of strategic human talent management. International experiences and evidence from organizations such as the World Bank, OECD, IDB, and ECLAC demonstrate that professionalized administrations, digital governance, and collaborative leadership improve operational efficiency, strengthen employee commitment, foster citizen trust, and ultimately enhance the quality and sustainability of public services.

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## Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

## Author contributions

**Conceptualization:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Data curation:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Formal analysis:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Research:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Methodology:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Supervision:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Validation:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Visualization:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Writing the original draft:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M. **Writing, review and editing:** Moreira, M. A., Muñoz, O. A., & Putin, A. M.

## Data availability statement

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

## Statement on the use of AI

The authors acknowledge the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies to improve the readability and clarity of the article.

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