

THE USE OF PROJECTIVE METHODS IN WORKING WITH STAFF

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Abstract: *An article describes the use of the tests „The Person” Picking an Apple From a Tree and „Man in the rain” to optimize the selection of personnel and the promotion of the personnel reserve of employees of employment centers in Ukraine. As a result, the following clusters were identified, which describe 86% of the sample: „personnel reserve” (16%), „stable employee” (52%), „abandonment of career” (18%).*

Keywords: projective tests, professional selection, civil servants, career, motivation.

In Ukraine, there is a reform of many industries-medicine, education, etc. The same process takes place in the state employment service of Ukraine. From civil service system it is transformed into one that should become the National Employment Agency and will carry out functions of the executive directorate of the Social Insurance Fund in case of unemployment. The emphasis in the agency's practical work is on active mediation and regulation of the labor market with the help of the latest information technologies; a unified electronic database of vacancies is formed; the approaches in working with registered unemployed have changed. The insurance principle of payment of the unemployment benefit was strengthened; entrepreneurial initiatives of registered unemployed are supported; Agency should pay special attention to the employment of citizens under the age of 24 (involving graduates to work on internship conditions based on the samples of Germany and Romania). The National Agency for Employment has been given the function of forecasting the situation in the employment market, in particular, the monthly public presentation of an assessment of the situation in this market.¹ All these reforms require changes in the work of the personnel of the employment service; first of all there is the question of the stress-resistance of employees, their level of satisfaction with work and the system of motivation.² At the same time, interesting

¹ *The state will contribute workout unemployed as a new. Presentation of the reform of the employment service*, 2015, retrieved from: www.ru.tsn.ua, accessed in 29.01.2018.

² I. M. Scherbakova, „Satisfaction with professional activity as an indicator of neuroticism of subjects of labor”, in *Pedagogical sciences: theory, history, innovative technologies*, no. 1 (45), 2015, pp. 196-192.

psychological trends are taking place in modern psychological studies: on the one hand, standardization of tests and questionnaires intended for scientific research takes place, on the other hand, in the practice of the HR manager, marketer and psychologist of an enterprise, narrative methods, training, and so on. Classical questionnaires do not sufficiently solve these problems, since public service employees are characterized by a high level of socially-desirable answers, which distorts the real picture. In this connection, there was a need to search and implement project methods in work with personnel and to study their effectiveness. The purpose of our research was to study the corporate culture of the National Employment Agency of Ukraine, motivation and stress resistance of employees.

Literature Review

Clare W. Graves³ in his studies put forward the idea of „*spiral dynamics*” of human development, its progress from levels of existence to levels of being. Based on this approach, F. Laloux⁴ developed his own theory of the dynamics of corporate cultures. He identified the following types of cultures: impulsive, conformist, competitive, pluralistic and evolutionary.⁵ In management, there is a somewhat different division of types of corporate cultures, which overlaps with the concept of F. Laloux. A bureaucratic organizational culture is characterized by treating the employee as an object of manipulation and control by the organization. Used motivation for employees here are economic interest and financial incentives. This level corresponds to impulsive and conformist types of corporate cultures. Organic organizational culture is based on meeting the social needs of employees, their need for communication and recognition, which is characteristic of a pluralistic corporate culture. Entrepreneurial organizational culture is built on the initiative of the employees themselves, so the main resource of the organization’s effectiveness is persistent and aggressive employees. The organization needs to find such people and constantly maintain control over them in the prevailing spirit of competitiveness and competition. A

³ C. W. Graves, „Levels of Existence: An Open System Theory of Values”, in *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, no. 10 (2), 1970, pp. 131-154.

⁴ F. Laloux, *Reinventing organizations*, Nelson Parker, 2014.

⁵ N. M. Bogolubova, J. V. Nikolaeva, V. I. Fokin, S. S. Shirin, E. E. Elts, „Contemporary problems of cultural cooperation: Issues in theory and practice”, in *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research*, no. 16 (12), 2013, pp. 1731-1734.

challenge is used as an effective method of motivating employees and corresponds to the potential of employees and possible remuneration, which opens a good opportunity for self-fulfillment. This is a competitive type of organization by F. Laloux.⁶

Participatory organizational culture (culture of participation, team) assumes the commonality of values, the priority of team goals and the complementarity of team members, joint planning and active participation of all team members in the analysis of problems and prospects, which corresponds to the evolutionary type by F. Laloux.⁷

D. Sweetman, J. B. Avey, B. C. Luthans, F. Luthans⁸ put forward the idea that psychological capital should have a positive impact on the success of labor, welfare of the individual, the level of subjective satisfaction with life. They draw attention to the fact that when conducting studies by the method of comparative groups or cross sections, difficulties arise with the search for causality: psychological capital influences the success of employees (especially in the field of information technology) or, on the contrary, the high level of professional achievements positively influences the mood of the staff. Patrick M. Wright and Gary C. McMahan⁹ also emphasize the importance of keeping in mind the mood and motivation of employees. These factors can significantly affect productivity, with the same level of abilities and competencies. The concept of social capital is increasingly used to explain the various social and economic processes taking place in society. Social capital can be defined as „a resource belonging to social relations and capable of increasing the productivity of purposeful actions”.¹⁰ In Ukraine, there were individual studies of the psychological climate of the collective.¹¹ Mainly pedagogical and military collectives were studied, and

⁶ F. Laloux, *Reinventing organizations*.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ D. Sweetman, F. Luthans, J. B. Avey, B. C. Luthans, „Positive Psychological Capital and Creative Performance”, in *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, no. 28 (1), 2011, pp. 4-13. DOI: 10.1002/CJAS.175.

⁹ P. M. Wright, G. C. McMahan, „Exploring human capital: putting human back into strategic human resource management”, in *Human Resource Management Journal*, no. 21 (2), 2011, pp. 93-104. DOI: 10.1111/j.1748-8583.2010.00165.x.

¹⁰ J. Häuberer, *Social Capital Theory*, Weisbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011.

¹¹ R. Florida, C. Mellander, K. Stolarick, „Inside the black box of regional development. Human capital, the creative class and tolerance”, in *Journal of Economic Geography*, no. 8, 2008, pp. 615-649; A. Trofimov, K. Miliutina, N. Bulatevych, M. Maksymov, Y. Nevidoma, O. Bilous, „Job Satisfaction and Self-Realization of Bookmakers”, in *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, no. 8 (4), 2017, pp. 1356-1360; L. G.

the study of corporate cultures of state and private enterprises was carried out in our previous studies,¹² where the dependence between the psychological capital of employees and low level of bureaucratization of the enterprise.

Methods

103 employees of the service who were representatives of different regions of Ukraine were examined. Of these, 25 are specialists in the job placement departments, 21 are chiefs of these departments, 19 are specialists in the departments for working with employers, 22 are chiefs of these departments, 16 are chiefs of different departments who are in the staff reserve of the National Agency. There were 70 women and 33 men, which correctly reflects the gender composition of the service staff as a whole. The age of respondents ranged from 28 to 55 years. All respondents willingly and voluntarily took part in the study while being on the upgrade courses. Three methods were used: „*The study of the type of corporate culture*”,¹³ and the projective techniques „*Man in the rain*”¹⁴ and „*The person picking an apple from a tree*”.¹⁵

The methodology „*Man in the rain*”¹⁶ was proposed by T. Zinkevich-Evstigneeva to assess the adaptive capacity and human resistance to the effects of stress factors. Figures are considered in comparison. Rain symbolizes a stressful situation. By the way a person changes in comparison with the first figure, one can judge the author's attitude to difficulties and ways of overcoming them. This test is especially important, when the psychologist is faced with the task of professional selection of employees for work, involving an increased degree of risk. In this case, psychological stability and the ability to resist negative influences will be an indicator of professional fitness.

Bikchintayeva, „Theoretic analysis psychodiagnostic of socio-psychological climate in a professional groups of policemen in context of legal psychology research”, in *Bulletin of Moscow University of ML*, no. 3, 2014, pp. 244-249.

¹² L. Gantt, C. Tabone, *Formal Elements Art Therapy Scale, The Rating Manual*, Gargoyle Press Morgantown, 1998.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ A. Trofimov, K. Miliutina, N. Bulatevych, M. Maksymov, Y. Nevidoma, O. Bilous, „Job Satisfaction and Self-Realization of Bookmakers”, in *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, no. 8 (4), 2017, pp. 1356-1360.

¹⁵ L. G. Bikchintayeva, „Theoretic analysis psychodiagnostic of socio-psychological climate”, pp. 244-249.

¹⁶ T. D. Zinkevich-Evstigneeva, *The way to the enhancement. Theory and practice of fairy tale therapy*, Saint Petersburg, Rech', 1998.

The technique „*The person picking an apple from a tree*” is offered by L. Gantt and C. Tabone¹⁷ and applied in the study of the attitude to the world and the individual lifestyle in adults and older adolescents.

The results were supplemented by expert assessments from the heads and teachers of the courses (10 people), interviews with respondents, which allowed to objectify the results obtained by projective methods.

Results and Discussion

In the course of the study it was revealed that the predominant type of corporate culture is bureaucratic, which is typical for the civil service. Employees demonstrate a sufficient level of satisfaction, regularly improve their qualifications, 32% of them have received or are in the process of receiving a second higher education in the social sphere (psychology, social work). The projective drawing „*The Person Picking an Apple From a Tree*” can be analyzed both by the presence and interpretation of individual details, and in general, guided by the plot and proportions. We chose a mixed type of interpretation. Figures were typologized for several basic options:

- The person picking apples by hands standing on the ground;
- The person uses a technical device;
- The person picking apples while standing on the stairs;
- The person picking apples with his/her hands standing on the ground with a nearby staircase.

Three respondents of this sample showed an option of the image where a person (child) sits on a tree and eats apples straight from the branch. Let's analyze in more detail figure 1, which belongs to a woman of 25 years.

Figure 1: A person picking apples from a tree (personnel reserve)

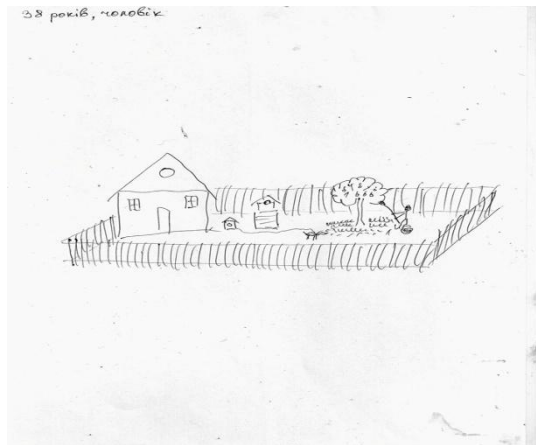


¹⁷ L. Gantt, C. Tabone, *Formal Elements Art Therapy Scale*.

Figure 1 belongs to a young woman from a group of personnel reserve. For five years in the service of employment, she has progressed from an ordinary employee of department on work with employers to the head of department and came to the training courses independently, with the purpose of mastering the new legislation in the field of employment. The figure shows a positive attitude towards the environment: there are a lot of apples, they are available, and the whole apple orchard is depicted. In the figure there are a ladder and a female figure that successfully climbs on it, which indicates a comfortable attitude to difficulties, a constructive approach to solving problems. A specific detail of the image is baskets in which there are already enough apples (resources) and they are replenished.

The image in Figure 2 is somewhat different.

Figure 2: A person picking apples from a tree (Head of Department)



The figure belongs to a man of 38 years old; he has been working steadily for the last 8 years as the head of the employment department of the regional employment center. The testee is satisfied with his work, achieves stable average indicators of the success of employment in his district. On the improvement courses has arrived on a scheduled basis: „We must pass the upgrading of qualifications every 5 years, therefore I was sent”. The leading motivation is to preserve the achieved situation and optimize the work of the department. The same features of the subject are also visible in the figure. This is not a garden, but a house surrounded by a reliable fence, there is a dog, there is a well, there is an apple tree. Everything is sufficiently well-groomed, orderly, a small-sized detailed picture. The figure of a person is drawn proportionally, does not occupy a dominant position. Apple picking is done by technical tools. The

resources do not accumulate, there is a certain isolation from the surrounding world, a desire to equip his world in conditions of constant protection from the external environment. Career advancement with such personality traits is possible, but it is difficult: there will be no effective interaction with partners, public organizations, etc. At the same time, the position of the department head is working successfully-the head focuses on work technologies, regulations and work optimization.

Very peculiar is Figure 3. It belongs to a woman of 48 years, she is a specialist in the department for working with employers, the work experience is 8 years. At the courses, the respondent was sent in accordance with the plan, for regular training. The respondent perceives corporate culture of the enterprise as bureaucratic; she has a high level of satisfaction with work. The specialist does not tend to career, she suggests stably work at her workplace in the distant future. When analyzing the image, you can see that the world is perceived positively, there are a lot of apples, and the tree is magnificent.

Figure 3: A person picking apples from a tree (a department employee)



Noteworthy is the presence of the stairs, which are not in use. While there is a ladder, it is not sufficiently stable, there is no land line in the figure. A human figure stands on the ground, does not use a ladder, and comfortably collects apples in a basket. The presence of a basket indicates the ability to accumulate resources, experience.

Thus, on the basis of in-depth interviews, expert assessments and their coincidences with the graphic and semantic characteristics of the „*A Person Picking Apples from a Tree*” test, it can be concluded that there is sufficient reliability of this test. The presence or absence of stairs,

baskets, the stability of the figure, etc. allows assuming perspectivity and motivation of career growth of specialists.

However, apart from the motivation for successful career advancement requires a sufficient level of stress resistance and effectiveness of coping strategies of specialists are needed.

Figure 4: The man in the rain (specialist of the department for work with employers)



The image is schematic, but it can be seen that the size of the figure is changing, the size is reduced significantly. The original level of detail is preserved. This may indicate that coping strategies are associated with an asthenic type of response, the level of stress is significant and affects the level of activity of the respondent, reduces it. The figure of a person is depicted with an umbrella that reliably protects against rain. Attention is drawn to the „sex change” of the figure. This may indicate that the response to stress is quite flexible, the reactions can be either feminine (under quiet circumstances) or masculine (in the case of stress). Thus, it can be noted that the stress resistance of this specialist is average, which does not contribute to career advancement.

Figure 5: The Man in the Rain (Specialist of the Employment Department)



Figure 5 also belongs to an ordinary employee, but from another department. She works directly with the unemployed and promotes their successful employment. The reduction in the size of the figure is insignificant, its main details remain, but another person protects from stress. Such high femininity of coping strategies promotes good relations in the team, conflict-free communication with the unemployed, but prevents independent decision-making under stress.

As a result of correlating the results of projective tests, in-depth interviews and expert assessments, the following clusters were identified that describe 86% of the sample:

- „Personnel Reserve”-the using of a ladder, the presence of a basket, many apples; there is a male and female figure in the „Man in the Rain”, the presence of an umbrella (16%);

- „Stable Employee”-a figure stands on the ground, the presence of the basket, a lot of apples; there is only a male or only female figure in the „Man in the Rain”, the presence of an umbrella (52%);

- „Giving Up a Career”-a figure stands on the ground, the presence of a ladder, the presence of a basket, little apples; There is only a male or only female figure in „The Man in the Rain”, the absence of an umbrella (18%).

Fourteen percent of respondents belonged to a mixed type. In their drawings, there was an option for using adaptations, activation under stress and, conversely, the presence of regressive tendencies: the

person depicted eating apples while sitting on a tree branch, hiding under a fungus in a children's sandbox.

Conclusions

The use of projective methods (in particular, „*The Person Picking an Apple from a Tree*” and „*The Man in the Rain*”) quite accurately reflects the motivations of clients for career growth and coping strategy. These methods can become an auxiliary tool for the professional selection of the personnel of the employment service and the personnel reserve.

The features we studied help in the formation of the personnel reserve of an enterprise with a predominantly bureaucratic corporate culture. The advantage of using projective methods is the rapid and holistic assessment of the personal characteristics of employees, their protection from socially desirable answers.

In the course of further research it is desirable to conduct a cross-cultural study of the personal characteristics of government employees in different countries and to study the personality characteristics of employees of enterprises with different types of corporate culture.