MANAGEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL READAPTATION IN TERMS OF THE MODERN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract: The global trend of technologization and intellectualization of labour, the crisis transformations of the Ukrainian society and the unstable state of the modern labour market impose special requirements to the specialist’s adaptation potential. The situations where a well-adapted specialist is forced to radically change the sphere of activity or get adapted to new professional, social, organizational and economic conditions of work are not uncommon. The research objective is to outline the general ways and means of managing professional readaptation in terms of the modern Ukrainian organizations. Based on the critical analysis of literature on labour psychology and human resources management, own professional experience and expert opinion survey, the author singled out the methodological foundations for the development of specific technology of organizational support for the process of professional readaptation of specialists. The list of the main reasons which cause the situation of readaptation and the specifics of organizational support is provided. The tasks of professional readaptation in the context of management psychology are formulated. Some aspects of adaptation are described, each of them has specific target tasks: psycho-physiological, professional, psychological and socio-organizational; specific recommendations on ways and means of managing readaptation are provided. A system of criteria for the success of professional readaptation, which is the basis of the corresponding diagnostic work, is developed. The material of the research paper is helpful for the development of the organizational provisions of psychological support system of professional readaptation of an individual in terms of the modern Ukrainian enterprises.

Keywords: secondary industrial adaptation, psycho-physiological adaptation, socio-psychological adaptation, adaptation management in the organization.

Professional readaptation is a little-researched phenomenon in the domestic social and organizational psychology. It comes to the process and result of adaptation of employees who already have work experience in the new professional, social, organizational and economic working conditions (physical factors, professional information, production operations and tasks, social relations, etc). However, the existing experience of professional activity is a factor that facilitates the process of production, social and organizational adaptation, but at the same time, it also causes difficulties due to the presence of stereotypical behavior models that are useless or make difficult the new situation of activity.
In organizational psychology labor adaptation is understood as a bilateral process that assumes mutual adaptation of the employee and the enterprise (L.V. Balabanova, S. V. Ivanova, Ye. F. Zeyer, T.S. Kabachenko, O. V. Kruchelnytska, D. P. Melnychuk, O. V. Sardak and many others). On the one hand, the change of profession or transition to a new organization is a conscious choice and responsible, motivated decision of the individual. On the other hand, the organization has certain expectations and takes over specific commitments by hiring a new employee. So, speaking about professional readaptation, we also understand a set of organizational measures aimed at adapting a mature person to the changed conditions of the professional environment. It is obvious that a readaptation process of an experienced specialist has special regularities and should take place according to the other rules than the primary professional adaptation of a young specialist. Competent management of the professional adaptation process allows the company to provide itself with the most qualified staff. However, in the scientific and practical literature this topic is almost not covered.

The purpose of this work is to describe the general ways and means of managing professional readaptation in terms of the modern Ukrainian organizations. In the context of the set goal, a number of tasks has been carried out: 1) common reasons that cause a readaptation situation and determine the specificity of organizational and psychological support are singled out; 2) specific tasks of professional readaptation in the context of management psychology are formulated; 3) adaptation levels, each of which has a specific object of impact and objectives are described; 4) success criteria of professional readaptation are developed.

Methodology

To solve the set tasks at the theoretical level, the method of critical analysis of scientific literature on labor psychology and management psychology is used; at the empirical level – the reflexion of one's own professional experience and expert method that formed the basis of the organisational regulations of psychological support system and management professional readaptation of individual in the modern Ukrainian enterprises.

Secondary production adaptation is widespread in the modern labor market. At the same time, the very situation of job change is an important factor on which a set of appropriate measures for readaptation depends. We have singled out the following reasons that are actual in terms of
today's Ukraine which determine the different ways of organizational support:

1) Introduction of new social methods of management, innovative production technology, reforming the organizational structure of enterprises, introduction of new forms of payment and other changes in working conditions that require the behavior restructuring and retraining or formation of new skills among employees.

2) Change of job without a change of profession means that a successful specialist has ambitions because of which the preliminary working conditions do not suit him/her. In the result of enterprise change, a person hopes for better working conditions, more adequate management, increase of moral and material remuneration for work, ability to use one's own professional skills for solving more complex and interesting problems and the like.

3) Failure at the previous job which led to the change of profession (it has much in common with the initial adaptation of a specialist, because a person does not have professional skills, but the specifics of the situation is that the negative experience of professionalization affects the self-perception of person).

4) Career growth with the change of position and/or working subdivision is considered as a crisis stage of professionalization and requires appropriate psychological and organizational support.

5) Forced relocation from the Crimea or ATO zone – such people can be high-class professionals, but they are forced to make a career in a new place experiencing complex stress in many spheres of their lives. These specialists are first of all in need of social adaptation.

6) Return to work after a long break which was followed by a relative social deprivation and reduction of formed professional skills (military service, maternity leave for women, cases of loss of health and disability). According to the labor legislation, such employees return to their former places of work, but the fact is that they return being other people with new experience, other values and family and household circumstances of life.

In general, in the labor adaptation process one singles out separate sides, each of which has a specific object, objectives and performance indicators. Usually, these are psychophysiological, professional, socio-organizational and psychological aspects (or levels)\(^1\). When solving the

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personnel problems, all types of adaptation are of importance, but the role of one or another aspect can manifest itself in different ways depending on the specific situation and professional groups.

**Results**

In the *psychophysiological adaptation* process there takes place the development of the whole set of working conditions that determine health, mood, tiredness and human performance, and if there is a long-term action it significantly affects the state of health of a person. These are physical and mental activities, the rhythm and level of monotonicity of work, sanitary and hygienic norms of the working environment, the convenience of the workplace, external factors (noise, lighting), etc. The result of adaptation at this level is evidenced by the effective performance of work tasks and labor operations with minimal energy, time and psychological efforts as well as the body's resistance to adverse changes in the external environment. Psychophysiological adaptation depends on person's health and the characteristics of the conditions in which the activity is carried out. In case when the conditions are unusual (work at depth, at height, in conditions of temperature difference, long-term changes connected with sleep deprivation), the requirements for physiological prerequisites for adaptation increase.

A special problem is readaptation in the current crisis conditions of the economy. A person, staying at his workplace, is often forced to get adapted to the new economic, social and psychological situation. The requirement to link salaries to their final results is usually followed by the increase of work intensity (due to a higher rate of work, more working hours as well as ignoring the occupational safety and health regulations).

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Disadaptation manifests itself in increased morbidity, injuries, uncompensated tiredness of employees\(^4\).

Successful physiological adaptation is contributed to by measures for adaptation of the professional environment to the person: improvement of working conditions; establishment of a comfortable working mode, consistent with other spheres of the employee's life; taking into account ergonomic requirements in organizing a workplace (choice of appropriate equipment, planning the workplace), etc.

Besides, one should take into account the complex effect of stress that accompanies the situation of readaptation. At the period of stress, the organism mobilizes all its resources until the force of stress exceeds the possibility of resistance. Then there is exhaustion. To manage stress, one should analyze the situation in detail, identify the factors that generate it and identify those that fall under targeted impact\(^5\).

**Professional (production) adaptation** provides for successful mastering a new profession: gradual improvement of labor abilities (skills, additional knowledge, cooperation skills, etc.), adaptation to the content and nature of work, its requirements and organizing as well as the formation of professionally necessary features of the individual and a positive attitude to work. This process depends on both objective factors (complexity of the profession itself) and the particularities of the employee (his(her) interests and individual psychological features). The measure of compliance of subjective and objective moments of professional adaptation is largely determined by how the workplace corresponds to the social and professional orientation of the employee. As a rule, job satisfaction occurs at achieving certain positive results\(^6\). The successful result of professional adaptation is considered to be well-cooperated work without restrictions on the labor tasks performance and reduced efficiency in usual working conditions\(^7\).

- Socio-psychological adaptation in the organization is usually considered as a whole, but, in our opinion, it includes two important aspects that should be considered individually – social and psychological.

**The psychological component** includes peace of mind that arises due to the corresponding nature of activity character to value systems and

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orientation of the individual, satisfaction with the results of one's own labor, social benefits and sufficient material support. Successful psychological adaptation manifests itself in the desire to continue working in the organization which is reflected in the life plans of the person.

It is known that there is a kind of personal traits and abilities that have a positive impact on readaptation regardless of belonging to a certain professional group and external circumstances. "Adaptive potential" is considered as a complex system of biological and socio-psychological properties that are actualized by a person to create and implement new programs of behavior in the changed conditions of life (O. M. Bohomolov, A.G. Maklakov, S.T. Posokhova, O. P. Sannikova and the others). Its taking into account is a precondition for the management of professional readaptation.

The social aspect provides for adaptation to the new society (in this case, it is the environment of resocialization), its traditions and unwritten norms, to the style of work of supervisors, etc. The employee is included in the system of relations of the team with established rules and value orientations. In the course of appropriate adaptation he(she) obtains the information about the system of business and personal relations, formal and informal groups and social positions of individual members of the organization. He takes this information actively and correlates it with his(her) own social experience, his value orientations, existing skills of problem and conflict solving.

Any person has a need to join the team as an equal person and be accepted by all members of the group. When adopting group norms, the process of person's identification with the staff as a whole or with a certain formal or informal group takes place. The most effective result of socio-psychological adaptation is mutual recognition of the system of standards when an individual accepts the system of values of the staff which in its turn, under his impact flexibly changes its rules and system of values. It is important that the adaptation in the team is a condition of productive social activity, self-determination and development of the specialist's individuality.

The moral and psychological climate of the team is of great

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importance in the readaptation. Positive business and informal relations develop a sense of mutual help and increase satisfaction with work and life in general. In its turn, this optimizes labor productivity and labor activity, affecting the psyche and mood of the employees.

**The organizational aspect** involves the assimilation of the role and organizational status of the workplace in the overall structure of the enterprise as well as understanding the organizational and economic mechanism of management. In the process of organizational adaptation, an employee gets acquainted with the particularities of enterprise management, the place of his/her subdivision and position in the overall system of goals and organizational structure. Upon successful adaptation, an employee should develop the understanding of his/her own role in the general production process.

O. V. Krushelnytska and D. P. Melnychuk\(^{12}\) note that when a person starts working in the organization, he/she is included in the system of internal organizational relations, taking several positions at the same time, each of which corresponds to a set of requirements, norms and rules of conduct which determine the social role of a person as an employee, colleague, subordinate, supervisor, member of the collective management body. Each of these positions requires appropriate human behavior. When getting hired to work in this or that organization, a person has certain goals, needs and norms of behavior according to which he/she sets requirements for the organization, working conditions and motivation. In this regard, it is necessary to organize the adaptation\(^{13}\).

In case of need of **social and professional rehabilitation** they allocate also economic, environmental and household components – providing with housing, material support, etc., that is, the creation around the employee of the social environment with the qualitatively-quantitative characteristics which would compensate a temporarily absent vital resource and provide decent level of existence in the society\(^{14}\).

T.S. Kabachenko\(^{15}\) emphasizes that organization psychologists deal with the research and optimization of all these types of adaptation. For example, there can be a question of adaptation when providing rationalization for the decision about who is better to hire – a young specialist and educate him/her investing in primary adaptation or find an

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experienced specialist, risking the difficulties of his "fitting" into the organizational culture. No less often the question is raised about the particularities of the secondary adaptation of experienced professionals due to the change of the technological subsystem. Special attention is paid to the socio-psychological adaptation since its main function is to form means, find conditions and forms of progressive development of the personality.\textsuperscript{16}

So, \textit{the tasks of professional readaptation} in the context of management psychology are as follows:

- normalization of functioning of psychophysiological indicators of the specialist at the expense of organizing the rational mode of work and activity, tiredness relief and working ability restoration;
- formation of the optimal psychological response to the situation of readaptation, mobilization of internal and external resources of the individual for overcoming the difficulties; orientation to self-rehabilitation;
- formation of clear ideas about social and psychological risk factors that accompany the situation of readaptation and ways of their overcoming;
- formation of the adequate situation of I-conception (realistic evaluation of one's own capabilities and prospects in connection with professional readaptation; understanding of one's own role, preservation of self-respect and self-confidence);
- formation of realistic expectations of the employee regarding the work and the development of positive and coordinated life prospect;
- help in overcoming the stress consequences, emotional experience connected with the situation of readaptation, reduce of obsession, anxiety and uncertainty connected with the fear of the unknown;
- development of the positive attitude to one's own work duties and assignments, the staff and the organization, and the profession in general (in case of change of professional activity); increase of job satisfaction;
- reduction of the number of mistakes at the stage of production adaptation and achievement of the established standards of the performance of work tasks;
- realizing the social role of a new employee in the team, optimization of labor relations, maintaining a favorable socio-psychological climate of the organization and the adoption of organizational culture;

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibidem}. 

546
Identification and correction of negative social, personal, professional affirmations that impede the full professional readaptation; teaching effective models of communication with the others.

Discussion

L.V. Balabanova and O. V. Sardak describe the management of the labor adaptation process as active impact on the factors that determine its course, timing, reduction of adverse effects, etc. The development of measures, that have a positive impact on adaptation and readaptation, involves knowledge of both subjective characteristics of the employee (sex, age, family situation, psychophysiological characteristics, state of health, education, work experience in the previous place, etc.) and factors of the working environment, available opportunities of the enterprise (working conditions, working time flexibility, work organizing, etc.) and the nature of their direct and indirect impact on the adaptation results. Among the other organizational conditions determining the success of readaptation is a quality work on matters of professional orientation of potential employees; objectivity of a business evaluation of the personnel; prestige and attractiveness of the profession, work in a specific organization; effective system of stimulation of work motivation; flexibility of personnel training system at the enterprise; particularities of social and psychological climate in the team. When managing a process of readaptation, the particularities of new and former profession and the differences between new and former place of work should also be taken into account. Thus, concretization of the approach to each employee, determining the importance of the relevant form of adaptation for specific conditions of the working environment and development of appropriate measures for rational adaptation are the basis of the process of its management which determines the appropriate technology. For young employees management technology has been developed in sufficient detail, but for mature professionals this work only started. Among the measures that help reduce the adaptation period and its negative consequences, it is possible to single out effective professional selection of personnel, in particular, professional reorientation, due to which a

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person acquires a new (or relatively new) sphere of activity in which he/she can realize his/her professional abilities and personal inclinations to the maximum, taking into account objectively set opportunities and limitations of the external situation. The process of transition from one labor activity to the other should take into account the acquired experience (knowledge, skills and professional qualities), age, health, psychophysiological characteristics as well as socio-economic interests of the individual. Here there helps timely expert examination of potential professional abilities (level of professional, social and general competence, psychological readiness to work in new conditions, presence of related professional skills, opportunities for professional retraining, etc.) and objective information on the most appropriate and prospective types of professional activity. At radical change of a profession and the choice of the new sphere of labor activity one should take into account the compliance of the person's individual characteristics to requirements of future activity; possibility of retraining and reskilling; and market demand for the employees of the relevant professions and qualifications. Professional reorientation of mature professionals has its own characteristics in comparison with the professional self-determination of young people: the presence of formed and solidified knowledge, skills, abilities, professionally important qualities as well as the decrease with age of the possibility of qualitative changes of individual and formation of new psychological structures that would meet the requirements of new activity. Previously acquired knowledge and skills act as compensators of reduced ability to work for these people\textsuperscript{20}.

Ye. O. Klimov writes that every person, in the situation when there is a necessity to change a profession, is a conscious subject of choice that not only thinks, plans the future, feels, but also suffers. For right orienting in the space of this choice, first of all, there is needed the information relevant to the request that gives people the opportunity "to live in the trial order" different options life professional ways\textsuperscript{21}. At the same time, in some cases one should overcome prejudice, misinformation and unfavorable attitude to such resocialization. Therefore, when retraining the qualified specialists one should take into account the special laws which are based on the individual's focus on productive work that prevents a person from seeing the meaning and the need for additional education or retraining. The scientist singles out the


following general rules of specialists' retraining: a) formation of a positive attitude to retraining and learning activity as such; b) constant demonstration of one's own progress and feasibility of newly acquired knowledge and skills; c) stimulation of innovation and creative search of one's own ways of solving labor tasks which are not provided by working instructions\textsuperscript{22}.

From the organizational point of view, there are several stages of professional adaptation with different duration. The \textit{Familiarization period} (25 or 35 days) during which an employee should demonstrate his(her) abilities, capabilities and a desire to work. A specialist gets acquainted with the team and increases the circle of acquaintances in the organization. The \textit{evaluation period} of achieving high labor efficiency and compatibility with the staff lasts from 5 to 12 months. A person performs the work in the qualified and timely manner, undertakes more complex tasks, expanding the circle of his(her) own responsibility and builds long-term plans for the career advancement. In subsequent periods (different researchers indicate the duration from 3 to 6 years) there takes place a gradual integration of the individual into the organization: a specialist takes an active part in solving production and organizational issues, feels the mood of the team, performs public assignments and his opinion is listened to (V.D. Shadrikov)\textsuperscript{23}.

The integration of a specialist into a new culture is a complex and often painful process. The professional adaptation is optimized by means of information impact: an employee's acquaintance with history and the purposes of the organization; with subdivision, conditions and particularities of work at the certain workplace; with the staff, its norms and traditions. A special place in the number of adaptation activities takes mentorship. In the practice of personnel management, this method allows to share socially valuable experience and ensure the continuity of social guidelines when the authorized persons of the organization, who have not only experience, but also informal authority, orient new staff members in behavior rules and show the activity samples. From authoritative persons and mentors one finds out not only methods of work, but also household habits and self-organization skills\textsuperscript{24,25}.

S.V. Ivanova emphasizes the necessity for orientation which includes initial teaching the special skills that an employee will need, detailed familiarization with the traditions, history and structure of the company as well as with areas of responsibility. The main aim is to explain why this model of behavior is the most rational. Such a system of activities allows, on the one hand, to help an employee understand his/her place in the company and the culture of communication, on the other hand, it disciplines and allows not to refer to the lack of information in the future. The adaptation plan should help dose the information in the way that one can avoid information overload of the person\textsuperscript{26}.

An important role in the effective adaptation is played by an immediate supervisor who prepares the team to meet a new employee and makes that the team members be comfortable and easy to interact with one other. In the organization one should create a system of mutual support of employees as well as cultivate the prestige of mentorship and position it as a stage of career and professional growth.

Besides, a supervisor examines the material working conditions and, within the framework of his authority, adapts them to the functional and psychological needs of an employee. Adaptation of work to the person calls for organizing the workplaces according to requirements of ergonomics; flexible regulation of rhythm and duration of working hours; flexible structure of the organization, distribution of labor functions and specific tasks taking into account abilities and character of employees; and individualization of system of labor motivation\textsuperscript{27}. This is especially important in the situation of secondary professional adaptation when a specialist already has a certain individual style of activity, realizes his own needs and appreciates them. The first tasks to an employee should be of the level of complexity that he (she) can get a sense of success and satisfaction from work. During the first period of readaptation, it is desirable that a supervisor often meet with a new employee and be interested in his progress and difficulties. Among other things, there is one more reference point: the impact of a personal example of authoritative representatives of the team provides not only the entry into the production situation, but also the support of the learned.

The success of professional adaptation is evidenced by a number of criteria. This list is helpful for the diagnostics and development of questionnaires. It is also the main reference point in the planning of

\textsuperscript{26} S.V. Ivanova, Candidate, Beginner, Employee. Personnel Management Tools that Really Work in Practice, Jeksmo, Moscow, 2006.

psychological support and organizational measures for professional reorientation:

1. Completion of the orientative stage, restoration of professional skills and abilities (or improvement of labor abilities); work has become habitual and it does not cause a sense of tension, fear or uncertainty from an employee.

2. Mastering the necessary amount of knowledge and skills required for the successful performance of production tasks; high performance of duties (work performance of an employee satisfies his(her) immediate supervisors and/or meets the established standards).

3. An employee's behavior complies with the requirements of the staff and the rules established by the leadership.

4. Psychological and emotional comfort in the new social and personal situation, self-confidence and absence of intra-personal conflicts related to the professional sphere. A satisfactory state of health and normal work ability.

5. An employee is satisfied with the performed work and its results as well as considers a salary and evaluation of his labor contribution fair.

6. Success in work associated with a sense of subjective well-being and life satisfaction as well as with positive life prospects of the individual. An employee has a clear desire to improve the skills in the profession, he(she) demonstrates realism in expectations and connects his(her) future with this work.

7. An employee became a part of the team and took an active position in it, determined and accepted his(her) social and professional role and has a fairly high status and authority in the team; production progress is followed by friendly relations.

8. Organizational socialization (sharing the values and norms of the new organization and understanding its functioning and management).

9. The behavior and activities of a specialist are important for the organization, he (she) has a significant impact on the establishment of the informal traditions and organizational rules, offers his(her) own solutions to business problems, expresses activeness and readiness for increase of task complexity.

10. A person effectively overcomes unfortunate circumstances; and demonstrates productive behavior in terms of mental tension and stress;

The process of adaptation in the company must be clearly determined and planned both in time and in content (the same applies to the specialists responsible for each stage). An important component in the system of measures on the personnel adaptation is the control over its
course as well as timely psychological assistance when difficulties arise (identification of difficulties, underlying reasons for them and development of system of measures for their overcoming). Psychological ensuring these processes includes:
- psychological expert examination of documents regulating the work on personnel adaptation;
- establishment of the bank for diagnostic methods and procedures aimed at evaluating the degree of adaptation;
- development of system of measures and procedures of impact on an employee in order to optimize the adaptation process;
- consulting of supervisors on the adaptation process optimization; consulting of the staff in connection with the adaptation process.28

The optimization of professional adaptation is the traditional direction of the psychologist's activity in the organization. However, the readaptation of experienced specialists (mature individual) requires a different approach. Regarding this issue, there is a significant lack of both theoretical information and practical technology with proven effectiveness. The key condition of successful professional adaptation is the development of an organizational mechanism for managing this process. This requires systematic methodological and organizational work; it depends on the structure of enterprise management, professionalism and coordination of the personnel service and the administration's readiness to solve social problems in the management field. The absence of such a mechanism for domestic organizations is the main reason for declarativity of adaptation management. The competent system of personnel adaptation in combination with professional selection and reorientation of experienced employees allows to achieve the most effective development of both the specialist and the company.

The result of the adaptation process is harmonious relations between the adaptive potential of the individual and new conditions of professional activity. That is, a person reaches the proper level of professional success, reveals his(her) professional potential and preserves his(her) mental health.