

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT AND PROMOTION SYSTEM MODEL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF COMPETITIVENESS IN MODERN ENTERPRISE AS LEARNING ORGANIZATION

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Abstract. At the end of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century increasing attention in social sciences is paid to the concept of *competitiveness* and its different contexts. Also more emphasis is put on the issue of a necessity to foster the development of competitiveness. The competitiveness of enterprise to a great extent is dependent on each employee's as specialist's competitiveness; therefore it is important to promote the specialists' competitiveness development in enterprises, developing a support and promotion system in modern enterprise as learning organisation in the context of knowledge society. The ecological and synergetic paradigms in social sciences, including education sciences, enable to study a personality and/or organization as a self-developing, self-organizing and self-evaluating system that functions in various spheres and learns to live, plan and forecast; constructs and accumulates its own experience; that is able to choose and to be responsible for the consequences of its own actions under the conditions of modern changes. The aim of the article is to make public the results of theoretical and empirical research, describing the worked out *Model of Support and Promotion System for Development of the Staff Competitiveness in Modern Enterprise as Learning Organization* and the results of evaluation.

Keywords: specialists'/staff's competitiveness, model, support and promotion system, enterprise as learning organisation.

Introduction

Since Latvia is a member of the European Union, the importance of our society competitiveness, our enterprises competitiveness and each member's competitiveness is becoming even more important. The development of competitiveness of Latvian population and the national economy must be ensured. The important means for competitiveness development are lifelong and lifewide education, therefore enterprises and other various institutions are becoming *learning organisations* that promote the professional development and competitiveness of their staff.

The ecological and synergetic paradigms in social sciences, including education sciences, enable to study a personality and/or organization as a self-developing, self-organizing and self-evaluating system that functions in various spheres and learns to live, plan and forecast; constructs and accumulates its own experience; that is able to choose and to be responsible for the consequences of its own actions under the conditions of modern changes. The synergetic approach enables to draw a conclusion that nowadays an individual and/or an organization as an open (dissipative) system must learn to live and change in the interaction with the changeable environment [1].

As we can see, in the old paradigm the competitiveness more often is related to the personality's success and victories over its competitor, sometimes it is related to an image of a harsh fighter, who has no mercy towards the enemy, competitor and who considers any means useful for achieving the goals. It is possible to draw the following conclusions from the substantiation of *the new paradigm of competitiveness*: crisis shall be attributed to all, even to the most successful entrepreneurs, the most advanced society and economy; however, to be competitive means to be able to adapt to new conditions, to overcome difficulties and to achieve more than before – before the crisis. In the new paradigm the ability to change, to live and to develop in the changeable environment is particularly important. The development of an entrepreneur's (businessman's) competitiveness nowadays is related not only to the features characteristic to a leader, but, first of all, to the socio-psychological and moral characterizing indicators, the interaction of a personality with society, attitude towards other people, oneself, duties, moral and ethical values. There are three spheres of the development of a specialist's competitiveness: 1) activity sphere; 2) the sphere of interaction with the environment, including the interaction with social environment - other people; 3) the sphere of a personality's self-development, including the self-awareness and self-determination.

The aim of the article is publishing the results of theoretical and empirical research, including *The Model of Support and Promotion System for Development of the Staff's Competitiveness in Modern Enterprise as Learning Organization* and evaluation of the results.

Materials and methods

During the recent years the research of the author of this article took place in collaboration with the chief specialist of the corporation "Balta" in Latvia Gita Katana and the Vice-rector of the University College of Economics and Culture PhD. Ineta Kristovska. At present the author of this article continues work on model development and improvement. Several trends of theoretical research serve as the methodological substantiation for the creation of *The Model for Development and Promotion of Staff's Competitiveness in Modern Enterprise as Learning Organization*.

- Career Counselling [2-6].
- Concurrentology, including substantiation of the concepts: personality's competitiveness and specialist's competitiveness [7-11].
- Knowledge Society [1; 12-14].
- Learning Organisation [15-17].
- Management Sciences, including Personnel Management [18-21].
- Mentoring [22-25].

The methods of the research: analysis and evaluation of scientific literature, modeling, expertise, Friedman Test using SPSS 19.0 software.

Results and discussion

• **Results of theoretical research.** The support and promotion of the specialists' competitiveness development is the interaction system which functions in two level contexts: 1) modern enterprise as learning organisation; 2) *knowledge society* (Fig. 1).

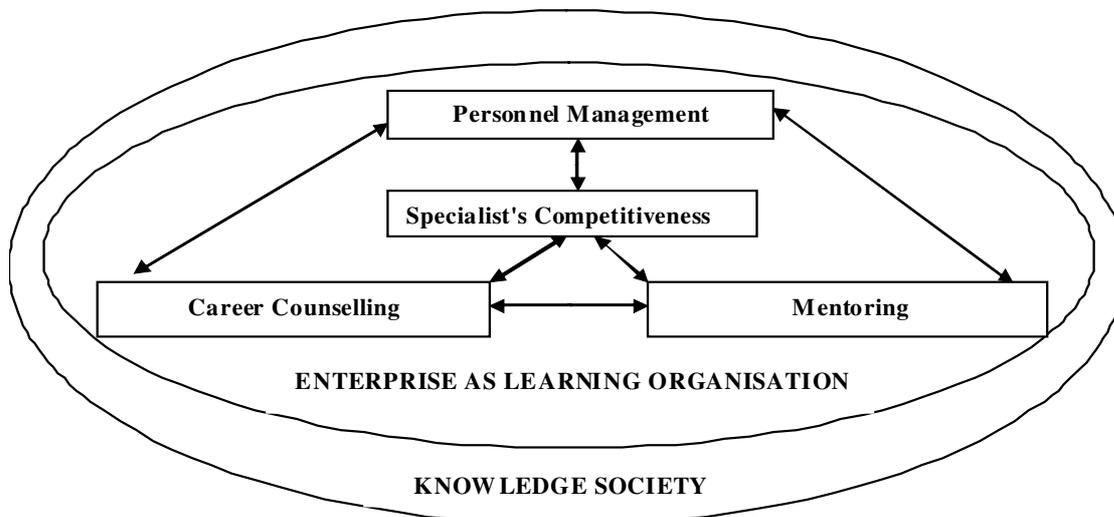


Fig.1. **Model of support and promotion system for development of the staff competitiveness in modern enterprise as learning organisation** (Author's design)

We research an enterprise as a self-developing, self-organising, self-evaluating and open system of business, professional development, professional support and promotion, and also educational environment. This means that the enterprise as a *learning organisation* is a viable system that is open for new information; able to study the processes going on in the surrounding environment, including transformational processes; can learn from the experience of others; ready, on the basis of obtained new information and new experience, to draw conclusions necessary for ensuring its viability and sustainability, and, on the basis of these conclusions, change continuously. There have been advantages of a *viable, sustainable and competitive organisation* described in the scientific literature, enabling them to become the *learning organisations or knowledge organisations*, because there have

been studies on the experience of such organisations that are popularised in the publications of several scientists (see references in the article chapter *Materials and methods*). There were **seven basic principles** identified that enable an enterprise to become a learning organisation: 1) the analysis and evaluation of environment; 2) the vision and aims; 3) cooperation; 4) taking upon the initiative and risks; 5) the control of the study process; 6) recognition and enhancement; 7) the continuation of professional development, including specialists' competitiveness.

In the developed model **knowledge society** is a very broad and multidimensional concept that, according to its meaning, is very closely related to ensuring an open and multifunctional social and educational environment, where education is the important means for promotion of society sustainable development, respecting the interests and needs of whole society and supplying a *lifelong and lifewide education* for all target groups.

In order to support and promote the development of specialist's competitiveness in an enterprise, at the beginning it is important to answer the following questions: What is competitiveness? What is the methodological basis for the promotion and assessment of competitiveness? The answer to these questions can be given studying the results of research performed in the field of *concurrentology*. It is possible to observe two tendencies in the substantiation of a specialists' competitiveness. These tendencies are related to the liberally rational and humanistic paradigms in education: 1) scientists of economics and other disciplines, on the basis of regularities, categories, conceptions, theories of economics, try to use transfers for the development of the definitions of a specialist's competitiveness; 2) representatives of pedagogy and psychology sciences develop the substantiation of *a personality's competitiveness* and/or *a specialist's competitiveness* on the basis of humanistic and ecological approach in education. The competitiveness of a specialist is related to his **marketability and employability in the labor market**.

We have included components of *personnel management, career counselling* and *mentoring* in this model, that during mutual interaction create the system of promotion and support for the development of *specialist's competitiveness* in an enterprise as learning/ knowledge organisation in the context of knowledge society. The aim of this system is to provide appropriate and friendly environment for the professional development of specialists, therefore the specialist of an enterprise with his/her competitiveness is placed in the centre of the model, that emphasises the aim that directs the functioning of the whole system: to cooperate with each specialist in the enterprise in order to support and promote his/her professional development, including competitiveness development (Fig. 1). The double pointed arrows that can be seen in the model between the components of the system show that in each organisation (enterprise) there must be cooperation between the representatives of personnel management, career counselling and mentoring, who working as a team can fulfil the main aim of this system of cooperation and perform their functions. The functions of personnel management, career counselling and mentoring differ due to the specificity of each sphere, but also mutually complement each other, showing that the functional segments of these spheres partially overlap.

● **Results of empirical research.** The developed model was also assessed by competent experts. To carry out the assessment of the devised model, the following materials were sent for the expert assessment: 1) expert's work sheet; 2) the model of specialists' competitiveness development and promotion in an organisation. Assessment was carried out without consultations or discussions between the experts. The assessment was made individually, independently and anonymously. The experts assessed the model in the scoring system of 10 points, where "1" meant a very low rating, but "10" – a very high rating.

Owing to the assessment method applied by the experts, we obtained results that are integrated in Table 1 and Table 2. In these tables both, the rating given by the experts and descriptive statistics are given. Descriptive statistics of the obtained assessment shows that all experts gave high (8), very high (9) and extremely high rating (10) respectively to each criteria model, and the lowest rating, that was given, were 8 points, but the highest-10 points evaluating 1) both the assessment of each expert; 2) and expert assessments that correspond to each criteria of the assessment. Judging from the sums in the assessments of the experts (Table 1), it can be concluded, that the highest ratings were given by the experts D and F, scattering of the ranking in their assessment is- amplitude 0, as all criteria of the model have received the highest rating "10" ($\Sigma = 80$), but the expert G has given the lowest rating in

comparison to the others ($\Sigma = 67$), whose minimum assessment was 8 points (high rating), but the highest rating-9 (very high rating).

Table 1

Results of Expertise

| Criteria for Evaluation | Evaluations of Experts | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
| Criterion A | 10 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 |
| Criterion B | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 8 |
| Criterion C | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| Criterion D | 9 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 |
| Criterion E | 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 |
| Criterion F | 9 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| Criterion G | 8 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 8 |
| Criterion H | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 8 |
| Σ | 75 | 76 | 78 | 80 | 70 | 80 | 67 |
| Min | 9 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| Max | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 |
| A | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Me | 9,5 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 8 |
| Mo | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 8 |

Table 2

Results of Expertise

| Criteria for Evaluation | $Ev_{coeff.}$ | R | Min | Max | A | Me | Mo | Σ |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Criterion A | 0.94 | 3.5 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 66 |
| Criterion B | 0.96 | 1.5 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 67 |
| Criterion C | 0.93 | 6.5 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 65 |
| Criterion D | 0.93 | 6.5 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 9.5 | 10 | 65 |
| Criterion E | 0.94 | 3.5 | 9 | 10 | 1 | 9.5 | 10 | 66 |
| Criterion F | 0.93 | 6.5 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 65 |
| Criterion G | 0.93 | 6.5 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 65 |
| Criterion H | 0.96 | 1.5 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 67 |

Explanation of abbreviations: Min (minimal value), Max (maximal value), A (amplitude), Me (median), Mo (mode), Σ (sum of expert evaluations), $Ev_{coeff.}$ (evaluation coefficient), R (rank)

The values of median and mode show that this expert has mainly given 8 points, the value of amplitude as scattering ratio is "1". Analysing the received expert assessments and viewing the criteria of model assessment (Table 2), it can be concluded that the advantages of the devised model are the following:

- The correspondence of the model to the aim of its development, namely, for the support and promotion of organisation staff competitiveness (Criterion B; $\Sigma = 67$; $\Sigma_{max} = 70$; $Ev_{coeff.} = 0.96$);
- Real and practical possibility to devise a system for the support of staff competitiveness in an organisation applying this model, and providing cooperation and team-work between specialists of different kinds and levels (Criterion H; $\Sigma = 67$; $\Sigma_{max} = 70$; $Ev_{coeff.} = 0.96$);
- The universality of the model, namely, wide application in different kinds of organisations (enterprise/institution/different government agencies) for the promotion and support of staff competitiveness (Criterion A; $\Sigma = 66$; $\Sigma_{max} = 70$; $Ev_{coeff.} = 0.94$);
- The scope and sufficiency of personnel management functions, included in the model (Criterion E; $\Sigma = 66$; $\Sigma_{max} = 70$; $Ev_{coeff.} = 0.94$);
- The relation of the model to the theory and practice of management (Criterion C; $\Sigma = 65$; $\Sigma_{max} = 70$; $Ev_{coeff.} = 0.93$);

- The transparency and understandability of the model (Criterion D; $\Sigma = 65$; $\Sigma_{\max} = 70$; $E_{V_{coeff.}} = 0.93$);
- The scope and sufficiency of career counselling functions included in the model (Criterion F; $\Sigma = 65$; $\Sigma_{\max} = 70$; $E_{V_{coeff.}} = 0.93$);
- The scope and sufficiency of mentoring functions included in the model (Criterion G; $\Sigma = 65$; $\Sigma_{\max} = 70$; $E_{V_{coeff.}} = 0.93$).

During the next stage of data processing and the analysis of the results, we performed the secondary processing of the data, using the Freedman Test and SPSS 17.0 software program. The following data were obtained (Table 3).

Table 3

Results of Friedman Test (SPSS 17.0)

| Obtained values | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| <i>N</i> | 7 |
| χ^2 (Chi-Square) | 3.934 |
| df (n-1) | 7 |
| Asymp. Sig. | 0.787 |

As Chi-Square criteria: $\chi^2 = 3.93 < \chi^2_{0.05;7} = 14.07$, but $p\text{-value} = 0.787 > \alpha = 0.05$, then we cannot deny H_0 . *It can be concluded that there is mutual concord among the experts' evaluation.*

Conclusions

1. The competitiveness of enterprise to a great extent is dependent on each employee's as specialist's competitiveness.
2. The development of theoretical substantiation for the conception of support and promotion of staff competitiveness enabled us to conclude that in an enterprise: 1) there must be both – personnel management, career counselling and mentoring; 2) there are numerous and different functions for the three components of the model.
3. Support and promotion of the specialists' competitiveness development is the interaction system which functions in two level contexts: 1) modern enterprise as learning organization; 2) knowledge society.
4. The experts have highly rated the model of specialist's competitiveness development and promotion system; in all eight criteria of assessment the range of rating was from 8 to 10 points (the highest possible score were 10 points). There is unanimity among the expert assessments.
5. The advantages of the devised model are the following: 1) the correspondence of the model to the aim of its development, namely, for the support and promotion of the staff competitiveness; 2) real and practical possibility to devise a system for the support of staff competitiveness in an organization applying this model, and providing cooperation and team-work between specialists of different kinds and levels; 3) the universality of the model and wide application in different kinds of organizations and enterprises (enterprise/institution/different government agencies), the amount of personal management, career consultation and mentoring functions is sufficient as they uncover the wide spectrum of functions in the support and promotion of staff's competitiveness; 4) the scope and sufficiency of personnel management functions included in the model; 5) the relation of the model to the theory and practice of management; 6) transparency and understandability of the model; 7) the scope and sufficiency of career counselling functions included in the model; 8) the scope and sufficiency of mentoring functions included in the model.

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