

# Professional Standard as an Indicator of Administrative Competence of a School Principal in Russia

A. Morozov<sup>1,a\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Education Management of the Russian Academy of Education, 16 Zhukovskogo str., 105062, Moscow, Russia

<sup>a</sup> [doc\\_morozov@mail.ru](mailto:doc_morozov@mail.ru)

\* Corresponding author

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**Abstract:** The value of the professional standard “The Head of General Education Organization” is analyzed in the article. This document is the criterion of compliance of the modern school principal with the demands of society and with the requirements of the rapidly changing situation, taking into account the rapid digitalization process. The professional standard “The Head of General Education Organization” is a kind of indicator of its managerial and personal competence. The problem of developing and implementing a professional standard of the head of a general education organization is due to the need for standardization, which is discussed in details in the article.

## 1. Introduction

In accordance with the Federal Law of December 29, 2012 No. 273-FZ “On Education in the Russian Federation” (hereinafter, the Federal Law “On Education”), the educational organization is managed on the basis of a combination of the principles of unity of command and collegiality (clause 2, article 26) regardless of ownership; at the same time, the head of the general education organization (director, head, manager, etc.) is the sole executive body of the general education organization. He/she carries out the current management of all activities in the educational institution. The Federal Law “On Education” refers to self-government bodies that have been established in practice as collegial bodies of governance (clause 4, article 26) [12].

The development of any the general education organization, the quality and effectiveness of its educational and other activities cannot be carried out without competent management. The effectiveness of management activities is largely determined by the level of competence and professionalism of managers [2].

Information is the subject and product of labor in the management system, it takes the form of a decision after all processing, as a result of which it serves as a guide for the implementation of certain and specific actions [1; 15]. The complexity of the management process is determined by the number and scale of problems to be solved, the variety of methods used and organizational principles. In addition, the difficulty lies in the fact that, often, new decisions have to be made at risk, which necessarily requires experience and an appropriate amount of knowledge and skills.

According to many researchers, coordination, motivation, control, planning, organization are the main functions of the management process [3; 9; 14].

The main concepts of management efficiency include:

- Labor efficiency of managers;
- Efficiency of decision making;
- Effectiveness of the management and communications system;
- Effectiveness of the management mechanism (method) [6].

In turn, efficiency depends on a variety of factors: goal, management styles of managers, team relationships, leadership skills, level of activity. In many ways, the effectiveness of management depends on the availability of feedback (feedback from employees of the staff), and if we take into account the fact that employees are the main resource and source of effective development of an organization, then, in modern conditions, their motivation becomes paramount in solving the problem of modernizing the personnel management system of a general education organization (hereinafter, referred to as GEO). High motivation of employees is one of the most important indicators of a cohesive team.

The need to develop a professional standard “Head of a General Education Organization” is confirmed by the requirements of Article 51 of the Federal Law “On Education.” The article specifies that candidates for the position of the head of a general education organization should have a higher education and comply with the qualification requirements specified in the qualification reference books for the relevant positions of general education organization managers and (or) professional standards [12].

At the same time, the Federal Law of May 2, 2015 No. 122-FZ “On Amendments to the Labor Code of the Russian Federation” [13] and Articles 11 and 73 of the Federal Law “On Education” [9] establish the obligation of employers to apply professional standards if there are legislation requirements for the qualifications required by the employee to perform a specific job function.

The main labor functions of the head of the general education organization include:

- Management of educational activities of the general education organization;
- Management of the development of a general education organization;
- Resource management of the general education organization;
- Representation of a general education organization in relations with state authorities.

Changes and additions made to the Unified Qualification Directory of the positions of managers, specialists and employees in the part describing the qualifications of heads of educational organizations and their deputies. Changes and additions made to the Unified Qualification Handbook, development of standard job duties are ineffective, because their positions inevitably lag behind the dynamic life activity of a modern general education organization. All this necessitates the creation of more effective management tools based on the new attitude to the process and the content of management of the educational institution in the form of professional standards.

The need for differentiation in the development of professional standards was noted at a meeting of the working group of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation on the development and application of professional standards at a meeting on April 24, 2017 (Minutes dated May 4, 2017 No. LO-43/06pr). The continuation of developing the previously proposed professional standard “The Head of an Educational Organization” that united all levels of education was considered inexpedient, since in this case, the specifics of management at different levels of education are not considered.

A systematic, complete description of the above labor functions of managing a general education organization in a professional standard will allow solving a complex of tasks, primarily:

- *In the field of management of a general education organization:* the high-quality performance of all labor functions described in the professional standard, in an aggregate ensuring the achievement of the goal(s) of professional activity, due to their rational distribution and organization of interaction between managers;
- *In the field of training:* determining the list of basic and additional educational programs providing training in the field of education management, developing their content, organizational models of continuing education for general education organization managers.

Contemporary conditions for the development of general education in the Russian Federation are characterized by the massive introduction of such innovations as, for example, network forms for the implementation of educational programs, the use of distance learning technologies and digital education, the expansion of public (public-professional) participation in the evaluation of activities and the management of

a general education organization and much more. However, even today, the work of many managers is built on an intuitive level within the framework of the so-called “manual control.”

## 2. Materials and Methods

The empirical base of research: 200 directors and deputy directors of schools in Moscow, Moscow region, Samara region, and Yaroslavl region took part in the study.

Methods of data collection: interviewing, online questioning.

Processing of the data: processing was carried out in the program Statistica 13.0. using the frequency analysis, methods of nonparametric statistics, the criterion of differences Mann-Whitney.

## 3. Results

In recent years, in the general education management system, the tendency is clearly traced to the appointment by heads of a general educational organization of individuals from among the so-called “managers” - those who have certain management experience (and, as practice shows, it is far from always in the field of education) and well established itself in this field. Such a term as “effective manager” has come into circulation, it characterizes a manager who is able to perform certain management tasks, implement certain projects in a fairly short time, with minimal costs, etc.

At the same time, the presence of this an effective manager is the experience of pedagogical activity in a general education organization, and indeed any other educational organization is not at all considered necessary and obligatory. The approach to this phenomenon on the part of higher authorities is quite simple: the main thing is that it knows how to manage and carry out its tasks.

In order to find out the opinion of the leaders of educational institutions about *whether a modern manager needs pedagogical experience or enough managerial experience*, we asked this question in the course of personal communication by interviewing respondents by phone, as well as by sending a pre-prepared questionnaire via the Internet.

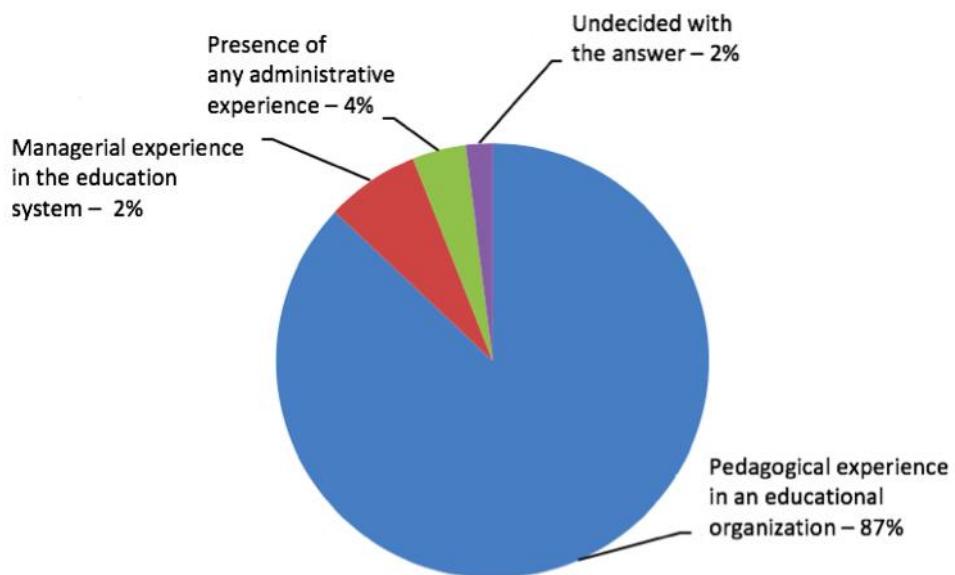
The results obtained by us are presented in Fig. 1.

Analysis of the answers allows us to state that most heads of general education organizations (174 out of 200) who took part in the survey (which makes up 87% of the total sample) consider having pedagogical experience not only important, but also a necessary condition for occupying a managerial position in the general education system.

14 respondents (or 7% of the total sample) expressed the opinion that having managerial experience in the education system is a prerequisite, while direct pedagogical experience is not decisive for occupying a managerial position in the general education system.

8 interviewees (which made up 4% of the total sample) suggest that the applicant's any managerial experience, including non-educational activities, is quite a enough reason to occupy a managerial position in the general education system in modern conditions.

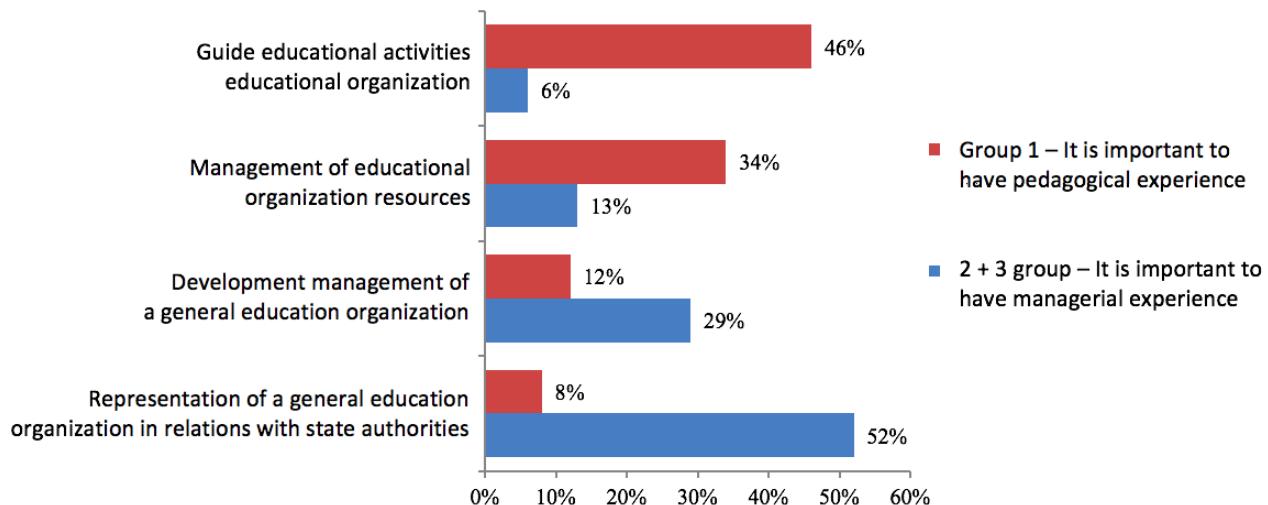
4 respondents (or 2% of the total sample) could not clearly define the answer to this question.



**Fig. 1.** Distribution of respondents' answers on the first question of the study.

Above, we have already called the basic labor functions of the modern head of the general education organization. In order to clarify the question of *which of these functions are priorities in the process of professional management* and which are less important, we asked the managers to rank them at their discretion: from the most significant (first position) to the least significant (last position).

The results obtained by us are presented in Fig. 2.



**Fig. 2.** Distribution of respondents' answers on the second question of the study.

Analysis of the answers allows us to state that the cumulative opinion about the priority of labor functions of the heads of educational institutions, who spoke on the first question for the obligatory availability of pedagogical experience for a managerial position in the general education system, differs significantly from the cumulative opinion of the heads of general education organizations who consider this experience completely optional.

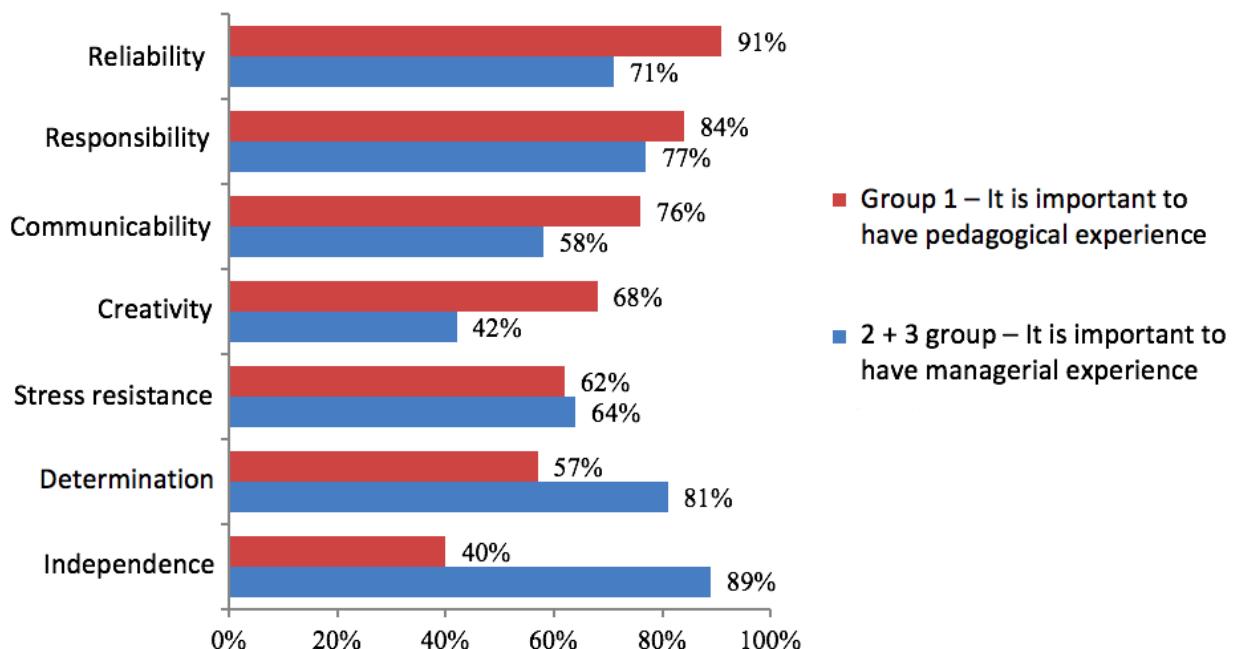
Thus, in the first group, the priority of the main labor functions (in descending order) is indicated as follows: *guide educational activities educational organization* (46%); *management of educational organization resources* (34%); *development management of a general education organization* (12%); *representation of a general education organization in relations with state authorities* (8%).

The representatives of the second group, who hold the opinion about the dominance of managerial experience over pedagogical, a different emphasis was found in determining significance for the head of the general education organization of basic labor functions (in decreasing order): *representation of a general education organization in relations with state authorities* (52%); *development management of a general education organization* (29%), *management of educational organization resources* (13%), *guide educational activities educational organization* (6%).

During the preliminary pilot survey, we found out the most important personal qualities from the point of view of the leaders of educational institutions, whose presence is mandatory for a modern general education manager.

In the next question, we tried to find out *which of the previously identified personal qualities of a manager are the most and least significant* for their effective management activities.

The results obtained by us are presented in Fig. 3.



**Fig. 3.** Distribution of respondents' answers on the third question of the study.

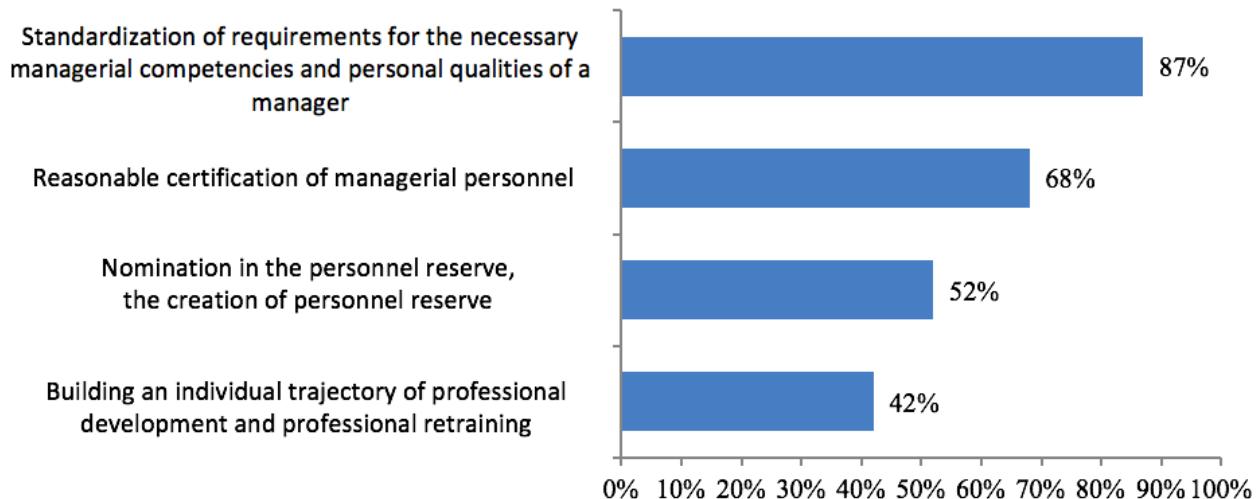
Analysis of the answers allows us to state that opinions on the most and least significant personal qualities of the modern head of a general education organization can be divided, as in the previous case, into two groups regarding statements on the first question about the priority of pedagogical or managerial experience for taking a managerial position in the system of education.

Respondents who believe that a modern leader cannot be an effective manager if he/she does not have pedagogical experience in a general education organization, they define a list of personal qualities in the following order: *reliability* (91%), *responsibility* (84%), *communicability* (76%), *creativity* (68%), *stress resistance* (62%), *determination* (57%), *independence* (40%).

Respondents who believe that a modern leader can be an effective manager and if he/she does not have pedagogical experience in a general education organization, i.e. the presence of managerial experience is a major indicator for them. They prioritize personal qualities in a different order: *independence* (89%), *determination* (81%), *responsibility* (77%), *reliability* (71%), *stress resistance* (64%), *communicability* (58%), *creativity* (42%).

In order to clarify the expectations of the general education institution managers for the implementation of the professional standard, it was proposed to rank four components by importance.

The results obtained by us are presented in Fig.4.



**Fig. 4.** Distribution of respondents' answers on the fourth question of the study.

Analysis of the answers allows us to state the following priority of the distribution of the components (descending): *standardization of requirements for the necessary managerial competencies and personal qualities of a manager* (87%); *reasonable certification of managerial personnel* (68%); *nomination in the personnel reserve, the creation of personnel reserve* (52%); *building an individual trajectory of professional development and professional retraining* (42%).

#### 4. Discussion

In the management of a general education organization, many management functions are implemented specifically, considering the characteristics of the main and additional activities, the organizational legal form, the specifics of non-profit organizations. Delegation of authority has its own specifics [5; 11].

The personal qualities of a modern leader play an equally important role. Among these qualities, priority positions are occupied by independence, interpersonal skills, decisiveness, resistance to stress, creativity, reliability, responsibility in making risky decisions, etc. [8]. In this case, the head of the general education organization bears all the responsibility, as he/she makes decisions, according to which both the well-being and further development of the organization depends, in general, and the material well-being of the members of the organization.

The effectiveness of management activity consists of creative adaptation with the use of human resources of the organization, where all employees know the motives, tasks and main goal, i.e. they support the organization's culture, which makes it possible to get a good result. The head of a general education organization should have complete and reliable information in order to make well-considered, comprehensively weighted, and sound management decisions in order to promptly identify and eliminate problems in the process of professional activity [1; 7].

A self-confident manager provides psychological comfort in the organization, thereby increasing staff motivation to work, while a manager who doubts the decision making does not inspire confidence in his subordinates. Stress resistance manager in management can be described as "the ability to take a punch." The head may be subject to negative emotional states: despondency, irritation, anger, but the constant suppression of emotions can lead to adverse effects, including a psychological burnout. Psychological burnout is the cause of professional personality strain [6]. That is why, it is so important that a manager find in a timely manner the means for emotional and psychological relief.

The desire for growth, achievement, and development is based on the need due to the presence of achievement motivation [4; 10]. The leader's motivation is maximized when one has adequate goals and when the necessary resources to accomplish them (including, first and foremost, human resources).

The success of management activities is sharply reduced if the head of a general education organization does not possess such qualities as reliability and responsibility.

## 5. Conclusion

The implementation of the professional standard discussed in the paper is due to the need for standardization of approaches to existing requests, in terms of the availability and adequacy of the existing and necessary set of managerial competencies and personal qualities to effectively manage a general education organization, to the selection and training of management personnel of a general education organization, conducting a comprehensively reasonable and adequate procedure for certifying education managers, creating high-quality personnel reserve and nominating the most worthy and promising employees for its composition, etc. The professional standard is an indicator of the managerial and personal competence of the modern director of the Russian school, its compliance with the demands of society and the requirements of today. The revision of the procedures for the selection and appointment of general education organization managers, dictated by the increased requirements for their managerial competence, inevitably entails a different alignment of managerial emphasis in accordance with modern requirements and basic labor functions of the general education organization manager, also with well-defined labor actions, the necessary knowledge and skills provided by professional standard.

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