

A Standard as a Tool for Identifying the Lack of Management Competencies

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Abstract: The article presents the results of a study aimed at identifying the lack of managerial competencies in the leaders of educational institutions in the category “hard skills” in the aspects of labor activities, skills, knowledge, as well as in the category “soft skills”. The requirements of the draft professional standard “Head of an Educational Organization” formed the basis of the study.

1. Introduction

The management of a modern educational organization (hereinafter, the EO) is a complex systemic process, which is based on a scientific approach to management, forming special requirements for the competence of the EO head [5]. Low and medium level of competence is not acceptable in the field of education, in connection with which the need for a scientific approach to solving the issues of professional development of the EO head arises. The manager must be ready to work in the current conditions of the “knowledge economy”. A modern leader should have the widest range of knowledge and skills in completely different areas, ranging from pedagogy to the basics of marketing and business processes, IT competencies (“digital skills”) [4, 9].

The project of the professional standard “Head of an Educational Organization” provides a good opportunity for the school principal to correlate his knowledge, skills, and actions with him, to define and strengthen his merits, and to identify and fill the lack of competences [3]. For its part, the state should create conditions facilitating this process, providing support to the school principal’s professional development aimed at creating a unified system of continuous education and the professional community [8].

The Laboratory of Professional Development of Education Managers of the Institute of Education Management of the Russian Academy of Education in the process of one of the studies has formed a model to support the professional development of heads of educational organizations, including the following blocks: compensation for deficiencies in professional competencies; accompaniment of the professional career of a manager; educational consulting; creation of expert and methodological centers for independent assessment and certification of qualifications of teachers and EO managers [6]. As part of the study of the support system for EO managers under the conditions of the introduced professional standard, the study was conducted as one of the steps aimed at focusing on the first block “Compensation of Professional Competence Deficiencies”. The study focused on identifying the lack of competencies of the EO heads, as well as the difficulties faced by the leaders of educational organizations in their work. In turn, the results of the study should be aimed at forming a system for compensating the deficiencies of professional competencies in the framework of the model for supporting the professional development of managers of educational organizations in order to implement a soft, phased introduction of the professional standard. At one stage of the research, the decision to conduct a survey using the online questionnaire was made. A questionnaire correlating its questions with the requirements of the draft of the professional standard “Head of an Educational Organization” was compiled, with the aim of identifying the readiness of heads of educational organizations to new requirements.

2. Materials and Methods

The questionnaire consists of two parts, the first part is the “passport”, which accumulates the respondents’ data; the second part is the main one, aimed directly at identifying the scarce managerial competencies of the leaders of educational organizations. The main part is represented by 4 sections: three sections are aimed at identifying the “hard skills” deficit and one at identifying the “soft skills” deficit:

- Labor activities causing difficulties;
- Lack of professional skills;
- Lack of professional knowledge;
- Lack of general competencies (soft skills).

Each of the above-mentioned sections, in turn, contains questions that correlate in content with the generalized work functions (GWF) of the draft of the professional standard “Head of an Educational Organization”:

- Management of educational activities of the educational organization;
- Management of the educational organization’s development;
- Resource management in educational organizations;
- Representation of EO in relations with various organizations.

The approximate structure and list of the main sections of the Questionnaire for the Survey of Managers (deputy heads and heads of structural divisions) of general education organizations are presented in Table 1:

TABLE 1. APPROXIMATE STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I. Expert details	1.	Full name
	2.	The subject of the Russian Federation
	3.	City, town
	4.	Name of educational organization
	5.	Contact details (address of the organization, telephone)
	6.	Position of the respondent
Part II. The study of managerial competencies of EO managers	1.	What do you think is the implementation of any labor actions that causes the greatest difficulties for the EO heads?
	2.	What professional skills, in your opinion, are not enough for the heads of EO, as a rule?
	3.	What kind of professional knowledge, in your opinion, is not enough for the EO heads, as a rule?

The survey was conducted using the online survey method, in which the leaders of educational organizations, as well as their deputies from 15 constituent entities of the Russian Federation, including representatives of such large cities as Moscow, Yaroslavl, Yakutsk, Saratov, Volgograd, Kirov, Cheboksary, etc. took part. A direct survey was carried out by means of selective questionnaires; address distribution was carried out to school principals and their deputies, according to the number of participants-individual. The survey was direct, respondents filled out the questionnaire personally. Types of questions used in the survey: closed, alternative. Processing of the results was carried out by the methods of descriptive statistics.

3. Results

Ultimately, the respondents’ answers were ranked according to the main activities of the sections of the draft professional standard.

1. In the *first* direction “*Management of educational activities of an educational organization*”, the following results were determined.

Respondents have difficulty in managing educational outcomes with regard to the achievement of certain goals, in managing the development of educational programs. The process of forming a system for monitoring

educational activities causes the greatest difficulties: there is a lack of a systematic approach, a lack of understanding of the purpose of this system, ignorance of tools and methods, and, as a result, an inability to integrate this system into the process.

In the *skill* category, a similar problem was identified, namely, insufficient knowledge of the methods of analyzing internal and external monitoring with subsequent adjustment of educational programs; evaluation of the results and effects of the educational organization's activities; coordination of activities with the subsequent implementation of the control of all participants in educational relations for the implementation of plans and programs. There are not enough skills (experience) in creating professional pedagogical communities on issues of training and education.

Lack of knowledge was identified in the fundamentals of practical psychology, business psychology, effective communication methods, as well as aspects of personal development. Respondents admitted that they lack modern knowledge on educational technologies and means of training and education, on modern methods of monitoring and evaluating students' educational achievements, on procedures for independent quality assessment.

2. As a result of processing the survey data on the *second* direction, "*Guidelines for developing an educational organization*", it became obvious that the most frequent complaints about *the lack* of competences in labor activities. Regarding this direction, the lack of any knowledge of the basics of marketing is the main reason: there are no skills to use measuring marketing tools and strategic management.

The main lack of *skills* of the second direction is the ability to effectively implement the state educational policy has been identified. It is important to note that the leader should be able to translate the main ideas of the state; he should not become a barrier to the ongoing reforms. The lack of adaptation mechanisms of the educational organization for modern reality hinders the implementation of its main mission, does not allow to build a development strategy, to apply modern management methods and technologies. Lack of the next skill as a consequence of the lack of the previous one, i.e. of the lack of ability to manage changes in the organization, to motivate subordinates to achieve strategic goals. It is important that the manager understands that it is impossible to achieve the goal, because of its absence or incorrectness, it is impossible to motivate your team.

Lack of ability to assess the competitive position of an educational organization, apply methods for monitoring the implementation and evaluation of programs, plans, projects, and performance, own methods of analyzing the external and internal environment, which is already indicated in the lack of actions in this area and what is a lack of knowledge and skills in the field of marketing and strategic management found to a lesser extent.

The identified *lack of knowledge* in matters of state educational policy is presumably possible due to gaps in theory, lack of knowledge about the methods, tools for managing educational systems, the basics of strategic management and marketing of educational services that have their own specific characteristics.

3. The *third* direction "*Management of educational organization resources*" is represented by the following results.

In the category of "*actions*", difficulties in monitoring, analyzing, evaluating, controlling various types of resources, organizing reports on the effectiveness of the use of resources and managing them have been revealed. Planning and ensuring a balanced distribution of all types of resources (financial, material, intangible, human (including personnel, methodical, informational), the determination of possible risks associated with changes in volume and redistribution. A certain number of difficulties in team management has been identified, namely in the formation of a system for assessing the quality of human resources, the system of motivation and incentives, taking into account the specifics of the institution, as well as the organization of the selection process and certification of personnel. Also, according to the survey, actions related to ensuring the procedure for concluding and executing economic and financial contracts, ensuring the organization's activities with local acts cause difficulties.

Deficiencies in *skills* were also identified in the field of human resource management, namely: assessment of the effectiveness of pedagogical and other categories of workers, identification of professional deficiencies and needs of workers, the use of modern forms of continuous development of personnel potential, as well as

proficiency in planning the development of professional and leadership skills. Among other things, the lack of skills was found in the area of financial management: in the formation of financial and management documents, in the coordination of budget items in accordance with the strategy of the educational organization; risk assessment; monitoring the fulfillment of obligations.

In the area of resource management, *the lack of knowledge* of the regulatory framework at various levels has been identified: from the federal and regional levels to the level of local acts; lack of management knowledge in almost all types of resources: financial and economic, material, intangible, human (including personnel), methodological, informational. Lack of knowledge of tools and methods: methods for monitoring efficient use of resources, methods for monitoring and analyzing the need for necessary resources, methods for planning and forecasting, as well as methods for assessing risks and ways to minimize them in the management process were also identified. Also, an important gap in knowledge today is the principles and methods of building the information space in an educational organization, the technology of communication channels in an organization, and ways to protect information.

4. In the *fourth* direction, "*Presentation of the educational organization in relations with various organizations*", the following deficiencies are revealed.

In *labor activities*, respondents face difficulties in defining the subjects and formats of interaction, organization of the process itself, difficulties in evaluating this process. These difficulties significantly hamper the development and improvement of both the educational organization and the directors of the educational organization directly.

The lack of *skills* was revealed according to the following parameters: possession of the skills to build constructive relations, oral and written communications with various subjects, interactions with government bodies, participants of educational relations, social partners and the local community, education authorities in the implementation of external monitoring, evaluation of educational activities, and the quality of student training.

In the absence of a high percentage of complaints about the lack of knowledge in the previous three areas, in the fourth the situation changes. this section goes to second place in relevance. The lack of knowledge is revealed in the normative component of their rights and obligations, algorithms of interaction with the external environment and, as a result, difficulties in defending their interests when interacting with counterparties arise. Misunderstanding of the principles, methods, mechanisms and technologies of interaction (including network), requirements for the interaction of an educational organization with government bodies, as well as the basic principles of state-public management of an educational organization arises.

5. Analysis of scientific works suggests that in any profession, especially in the field of management, not only professional skills and "hard skills" competencies that make up the core of competencies matter, but also "soft skills" are important (additional knowledge and skills that impossible to get through formal education). "Soft skills" allows one to harmoniously interact with other people and increase the efficiency of the activity, in general. It is important to note that, depending on the professional orientation, competences can be moved from the core to the periphery and vice versa, i.e. they can be major or minor for a particular profession.

As a rule, soft skills are divided into personal skills (internal attitudes), social skills (interpersonal skills) and additional skills (for example, managerial skills). In recent years, "digital skills", penetrating into almost all areas of activity, which, depending on the profession, can be included in the core and are also distinguished in a separate category [7].

Among other things, the identification of the lack of competencies in the "soft skills" category was conducted as part of this study. Knowledge of foreign languages has become a leader among soft competencies that are not enough for heads of educational organizations, according to the results of online questioning. Slightly less than half of the respondents reported on this item. Behind it (with a slight lag), the following categories follow: the category of skills of strategic and systems thinking, entrepreneurial skills, knowledge of the basics of management and the ability to put them into practice, then so-called managerial skills: delegation of authority skills, ability to form effective teams of like-minded people, knowledge in the field of planning, "digital skills". Also, the imperfection of personal qualities, such as the ability to control stress, flexibility, and flexible management skills, the ability to anticipate the development of events, objectively, and realistically assess them, was especially noted.

TABLE 2. DEFICIENCIES OF “SOFT SKILLS” IN HEADS OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Personal qualities (and installation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to control stress • Flexibility, i.e. the ability to quickly restructure, abandon ineffective strategy and tactics • Ability to anticipate developments • Objectivity and realism of the assessment of events
Social skills (interpersonal skills)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation and public speaking skills
Additional knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign language skills • Strategic and systemic thinking • Entrepreneurial skills • Flexible management skills • Knowledge of the basics of modern management and the ability to put them into practice • Knowledge in the field of planning (self-management and time management) • Information literacy (including the use of in work: modern gadgets, information technology, social networks)

4. Conclusion

According to the results of the research, the system of remote retraining was created. It consists of various modules, from which individual training programs are “assembled” in various combinations depending on the input data, requests and needs of an existing or potential head (or his deputy) of an educational organization coming to training, aimed at eliminating the lack of competencies from the core “hard skills”. Substantially, the modules are designed taking into account the most widespread deficiencies in managerial competencies identified during the study. Thus, we see that, using the scientific approach, the use of the Professional Standard as a tool for determining the lack of managerial competencies, as well as for the professional development of the head of an educational organization, is possible.

In general, today, the compensation of deficiencies of “hard skills” of heads of educational organizations in the Russian Federation has been implemented in the form of magistracy programs in the field of education management, advanced training programs and retraining.

“Soft skills” deficit compensation programs exist in an unsystematic, fragmented state in the form of master’s classes, training programs, and other events held by various organizations, often not related to education. It should be noted that the trend of introducing these programs into the learning process at the higher education level is present abroad [10]. However, it is worth noting that the implementation of educational practices that compensate for deficiencies from the “soft skills” category is possible within the framework of the implementation of one of the parts of the federal project “Teacher of the Future” – the creation of a network of Centers for the Continuous Development of Professional Skills of Educators [1, 2].

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