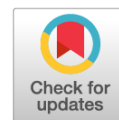


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Requisite Management Knowledge and Skills for State Civil Officer Competence

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the universal management knowledge and skills required for “head” state civil officer competence. In this regard, the purpose of the study is to determine what universal management knowledge and skills include and what civil officers should know about management. The author conducts a comprehensive study of the concept of “management” and identifies an approximate list of civil officer management skills. It concludes that management skills are formed mainly through the constant application of universal management principles.

Keywords: state civil officer; civil service; management; management principles; management knowledge; management skills.

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Управленческие знания и управленческие умения в компетентности государственного гражданского служащего

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Аннотация. В статье исследуются управленческие знания и управленческие умения, содержащиеся в составе компетентности государственных гражданских служащих категории «руководители», в связи с этим цель исследования — определить, что включают в себя универсальные управленческие знания и умения; что должен знать об управлении гражданский служащий. Автор комплексно исследует понятие «управление», выделяет примерный перечень управленческих умений гражданского служащего, раскрывает их содержание. Делается вывод, что управленческие умения формируются главным образом в процессе постоянного применения универсальных принципов управления.

Ключевые слова: государственный гражданский служащий; гражданская служба; управление; принципы управления; управленческие знания; управленческие умения.

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As we know, the management function encompasses production, trade, distribution, consumption, services, and the financial aspects, as well as the non-productive aspect, which includes education, culture, health care, defense and security, and public service. Furthermore, management indirectly affects the personal development of an individual, including professional development and career growth.

According to the Methodological Toolkit for the Formation of the Civil Service Personnel of the Russian Federation¹, the skills mentioned in the basic qualification requirements also include managerial skills, indicating desirability of certain professional and personal qualities.

In addition, the underlying meaning of this concept is provided. Managerial skills are one of the key skills essential for efficiently performing official duties at the civil service posts in the “managers” category of the highest, main, and leading groups of civil service positions, as well as other positions whose job descriptions include the organization and planning duties of civil servants in line or functional subordination, and in general the state body, the structural unit(s) of the state body, or project group(s), as well as monitoring the progress of documents and projects to achieve the goals and objectives of the state body, structural unit(s) of the state body, or project team(s)².

From this definition, it is unclear what exactly constitutes a civil servant in the “heads” category of the highest, main, and leading groups of civil service positions and equivalent civil servants whose job descriptions include planning, organizing, and controlling the activities that civil servants under their subordination should be able to perform. It is not nearly so clear what managerial knowledge they should possess as such skills are often developed through knowledge and experience.

The same methodological toolkit for determining the array of professional knowledge, skills, and abilities of a given individual also refers the reader to the federal state educational standards. This referral means, essentially, that managerial knowledge is initially taught solely at higher and secondary vocational education institutions. However, the peculiarity of acquiring managerial knowledge in educational institutions is that those who teach economics also study management from the standpoint of production organization. Correspondingly, those who teach engineering and programming do so from the perspective of technical, technological, and information processes. Similarly, psychologists study psychological and behavioral aspects of management, whereas lawyers working within, for example, administrative and municipal law space study the legal aspects of state and municipal management. In other words, in the professional realm, management trainees precisely develop those aspects of knowledge in the management

field, which they initially acquired while preparing for their primary specialty.

Unfortunately, upon entering the civil service, these specialists are suddenly faced with the need, when filling a managerial position, to demonstrate that their management competence includes the additional managerial knowledge and skills required for the particular position.

Let us consider this situation using a specific example. In the job description for the position of the Voronezh region state civil service Deputy Head at the State Housing Inspectorate of the Voronezh region who is the head of the legal regulation department, the basic knowledge and skills required to perform the job duties regardless of the field and type of professional service activities needed include, among others, the ability to plan, use office time judiciously, and achieve expected results; moreover, the posting requested communication skills, the ability to think strategically, and the ability to manage change. Clearly, these are all skills about management.

It is highly unlikely that any law school, for example, can provide knowledge on all of these managerial skills. In this case, as we see, to obtain a managerial position, the candidate must have many universally applicable management knowledge and skills in his arsenal, regardless of the particular field and type of professional service activity required in the position, and whether the applicant ever had access to appropriate available education.

Hence, this study aims to determine what comprises the set of universal managerial knowledge and skills; in particular, exactly what skills should a civil servant, an *ex officio* manager, acquire about management. The answers to these questions will help applicants for managerial positions understand the amount of managerial knowledge and skills to be gained prior to entering the job market, as well as assist current civil servants to successfully pass management certification exams. After all, in practice, members of attestation commissions often interrogate about job descriptions. Moreover, when asked in their professional service activities, even highly qualified specialists often find it difficult to answer the essentially simple question, “What is a management decision?”

Therefore, firstly, it is essential to develop a universal concept of “management.” At this point, the primary difficulty arises. As D.M. Gvishiani wrote: “Although management forms a special, specific field of human activity, it cannot be considered a completely independent process, which exists by itself, for it is included in a broader system, which determines, so to speak, the specific management features” [1]. In other words, the term management often means different things to different professional groups.

For example, V.I. Oseychuk believes that from the viewpoint of classical management theory, management is a process of planning, organization, motivation, and control. In contrast, from the perspective of systems analysis, management is the art of making and executing decisions.

¹ Official website of the Labor Ministry of Russia. URL: <https://mintrud.gov.ru/ministry/programms/gossluzhba/16/2> (accessed on September 01, 2021).

² Ibid.

From the viewpoint of cybernetics, management is organizing a purposeful impact on an object that it reacts by moving to the desired state. From the perspective of law, management is the legal regulation of social relations as assisted by laws. Finally, from the perception of political science, the term refers to the management of society and nation [2].

It follows that there is no unified concept of "management" because there is no unified management science. The management science is an amalgamation of various approaches, theories, and concepts found in various scientific, academic, and business disciplines. The development of management science amalgamates the achievements of cybernetic scientists, workers in state management theory, as well as those in the psychology and sociology of management. Other contributions to the field come from mathematical and statistical methods in management, marketing, organization theory, and lastly, the various academic theories of management and scientific management. In turn, from the latter, certain separate categories stand out: strategic management, innovation management, personnel management, leadership theory, and so on.

During the formation and development of the management sciences cycle, the developers relied on practical experience of managerial activity. Therefore, management is also an area that needs and uses human creative efforts. The art of management is primarily the ability to apply managerial knowledge to a given situation. It is appropriate to recall a popular saying: "The aim of science is knowledge, and the aim of art is skill." In other words, a civil servant who knows the subject well, but lacks special management knowledge or managerial experience, is unlikely to be a successful manager.

The most universal or generalized characteristic of management is that it is a function of organized systems with different natures (biological, social, and technical ones). It is designed to ensure the preservation of that system, including its successful functioning.

The civil service is a complex social system where people manage other people. In order to manage successfully within that system, it is important to understand several fundamental points.

Management of any social system, including the civil service, is a purposeful action, which boils down to achieving certain goals or ensuring purposeful kinds of behavior.

Hence, the first and "the most essential management point is that management is always a purposeful influence on some object (management object) to make the behavior of this object purposeful, i.e., aimed at achieving a certain goal" [3]. The second point is that management always results from the development of management goals. The purposeful behavior of a managed object is both a goal and a management result.

The main result of management in the civil service system is the achievement of public administration objectives during the practical activity of the state apparatus within its

competence. In turn, the achievement of intermediate public administration objectives is aimed at solving the overall goal, designated in the basic law of our country, ensuring the fulfillment of the citizens' interests, rights, and freedom, and as seen in the current legislation, to ensure the provision of state social services. Therefore, the effectiveness of the implementation of the management function in the civil service system should be assessed only on the basis of how effectively its main goal, purpose, the purpose for which the civil service was established, is implemented, and what role does the management play in this.

The next point is that management is a complex system that comprises at least three parts: 1) managing subsystem (management subject), 2) managed subsystem (management object), and 3) the links between them through which different characteristic information flows: team flow, from the management subject to the object, and informational flow, from the object to the subject [3]. Thus, management can be considered a purposeful impact of the management subject on the management object to achieve an expected result. However, here, it is important to note that a civil servant answering the question "What is management?" must firstly focus on the particular managerial sphere, wherein managerial relations understandable to him to be in connection with the function of civil service arise, i.e., state-manager relations and specific managerial relations in the public civil service system.

Returning to the management structure, the management objects are separate but interrelated elements: an organization (a public authority), an individual, a collective of people, and those people's activities. Thus, management in the civil service comprises the management of people's activities, that is, the management of people to achieve the desired management goals. Under the term "activity", the legislature enshrined the concept of "public administration", stating that it is the "activity of public authorities to implement their powers in the realm of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation and ensuring national security of the Russian Federation"³.

Managerial activity is conscious and is a relationship between vertical and horizontal actions, works, operations, and activities. The activity includes goals, means, results, and the activation process itself, each of which is characterized by continuity. In this connection, management can be considered a continuous, purposeful process of managerial activity. As E.A. Korolev indicates, "the management process is the movement of information flowing in a closed circle, at least, between two objects, and the result is a purposeful action, the purposeful behavior of one of the objects" [3]. The flow of information in this process is associated with its reception, processing, storage, and transmission.

³ Point 2, Article 3 of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation No. 172-FZ of June 28, 2014. "On strategic planning in the Russian Federation". URL: <http://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/70684666/paragraph/1/doclist/18724> (accessed on September 01, 2021).

Management as a process of people's activities in the system of state bodies is a consistent implementation of certain management functions, which, as it is understood in modern management theory, is deemed to be a set of actions, relatively homogeneous in at least some characteristics, aimed at achieving intermediate tasks, and subordinated to the main goal of management⁴. The main functions of public civil service management are planning, organization, coordination, motivation, and control. A manager's main task is to clearly define the content of these functions and combine them in an optimum way within the framework of concrete activity. The implementation of management functions is always cyclic in nature, with the completion of one function marking the beginning of the next function. Concurrently, control, as the final function in the management process, features a feedback property, which ensures, finally, the cyclic nature of management.

Furthermore, note that the study of the management process in terms of the implementation of its functions allows the viewer to establish appropriate workload for each function and determine the need for human resources while, ultimately, forming an organizational structure [4]. The connecting link, the "glue," between management functions is communication and management decisions. The basis of management implementation is a management decision. It is no secret that the quality of the civil servants' work is largely associated, almost entirely, with the quality preparation of management decisions and their implementation.

When making managerial decisions, it is important to know and understand the applicable law and regulations, procedures for compliance with both, and any applicable technical-legal requirements. The efficiency of the public civil servants' work on decision preparation is linked with a careful comparison of resources and time required to realize any given decision. Timeliness and promptness in making some decisions are crucial in management success. Moreover, of course, when making a managerial decision, it is important not only to have knowledge and practical management experience but also the presence of the volitional qualities of an outstanding manager

The methodology for making managerial decisions is subjectively developed by management theory; in this article, we will explore only the psychological processes involved in managerial decision-making.

Managerial decision-making is a volitional act of a management subject, which results in choosing the type and method of correction for certain conditions and circumstances to form a certain behavior model of an individual or people involved in the managerial relations [5]. Thus, a managerial decision of a civil servant is a deliberate action based on the law, analysis of the facts and circumstances, and an assessment of the available

information, which is then couched in a legal form, such as an order or instruction.

Through the achievements of psychology, we can distinguish the following stages of volitional action: goal setting and its preliminary discussion; the processing of available information and the struggle to comprehend motives; making the decision itself; executing the decision; and evaluating the decision and its execution⁵. Of great importance is the clear understanding of goals, and the cognition of those objective conditions within which this goal will be achieved.

Information processing and the struggle of dealing with motives transpire on the cognitive and emotional levels. In this connection, the result of information processing by the head depends not only on the content and perception of the information but also on the manager's emotional state. A supervisor's nervousness, confusion, and uncertainty in giving orders may negatively affect the actions of subordinates. In high emotional tension situations, even an outstanding manager may take a wrong decision.

Understanding what a manager's decision is based upon is essential for good teamwork. In this regard, the civil servant must be able to segregate facts, emotions, and interpretations. This ability is important especially when deciding on the results of a competition for a position, qualification exams, certifications, or performance reviews, or even when this skill directly affects people's rights and interests. When working out a decision, the struggle of motives is uniquely complex because this struggle includes various interests and needs, all very typical for the civil service and for all the services, in general. Here too, some of the managerial skills of a civil servant must exhibit themselves.

Most importantly, the supervisor's correct actions must often rely on the knowledge of his subordinates. The manager must be able to determine and recognize the personal motives and values of his employees and superiors, along with their desires and needs. Some will only be interested in material security, allowing them to have a family, as well as providing for the education of family members and their creative development. Others will be interested in work because of the need to have power over people and growth prospects. Several are motivated by the desire to be involved in a common cause, to belong to a particular team. Creative self-realization of an individual, the opportunity to fully realize one's abilities, is the motive that drives the highest interest degree in civil service work.

Furthermore, it is vital that a person's behavior is shaped according to certain moral principles and internal beliefs, which will condition that individual's attitude toward reality. Eventually, however, all human behavior is a reaction to external stimuli. In this case, the manager needs to determine the appropriate system of incentives, thereby

⁴ Manager's Handbook Dictionary / Edited by M.G. Lapusta. Moscow: INFRA-M, 1996. P. 138.

⁵ Zub A.T. Management psychology: a textbook. Moscow: Publishing house Yurait, 2014. P. 100-136.

linking the interests of subordinates to the service interests. After all, how motivated civil servants will be will ultimately depend on the effectiveness of the entire team. Certainly, speaking of these managerial skills, it should be noted that they cannot come into play without also possessing knowledge of basic management psychology. An important psychological factor in making and implementing managerial decisions is persuasion. Persuasion is required not only to make a decision but also to convince others, including subordinates, management, and those who will execute the decision, of its correctness and rationality. Often this task falls on the shoulders of the one who prepared the decision or led its preparation. It has long been observed that effective persuasion, as an element of motivating people, should be emotional and accessible while performed based on facts and examples [6]. One important form of persuasion is the personal example. We should not forget that subordinates will, to a certain extent, follow their leader.

The most important part of volitional action is, of course, the eventual execution of the decision. The decision itself may not be placed above execution. Lastly, after execution, there comes the stage of the evaluation of the decision and its execution. This process allows the manager to see the positive, and more importantly, the negative aspects of the decision. Therefore, it is crucial for a civil servant to develop the habit of analyzing his actions and being self-critical. Critical analysis of the work results of the unit that prepared the decision and its mistakes can be of significant benefit to the future management process. It would also be useful to compare the work methods of subordinate department heads, including the incentives they used, to compare the employees' actions with the tasks set.

This review, of course, should not be done publicly, through gathering the entire team, but rather using effective and diplomatic methods of communication. This choice will allow the manager to avoid conflicting situations in the team. Frank conversations between management and subordinates about what could have been done better are of great importance, particularly. In this regard, it is important for the manager to bypass communication barriers with subordinates to identify the essential nature of any problems. In conclusion, civil servants must be able to communicate properly.

For purposes of this study, it is fair to say that the universal managerial skills of a civil servant should include the following:

- the ability to plan one's work and to organize and control subordinates' work;
- the ability to make managerial decisions;
- the ability to determine people's needs, motives, and interests;
- the ability to motivate subordinates;
- psychological and communicative skills.

In this connection, it is proposed to include these factors in the methodological toolkit on the formation of

the personnel composition of the public civil service at the Russian Federation to explain the term "managerial skills". This specified list of managerial skills is not exhaustive. All of the skills delineated also include a subset of additional skills. For example, communicative skills include listening skills, oratorical skills, knowledge of effective communication methods, the ability to remove communication barriers, identify people's psycho-types, manage conflict, and even the ability to identify deception. Management through the use of these skills will allow a manager to lead people so that the achievement of desired goals will be performed humanely, economically, and rationally.

Eventually, the real question is: How does a civil servant develop these skills? Certainly, some of these knowledge-based skills can be acquired in an academic institution during higher education. Subsequently, a civil servant can acquire managerial knowledge and skills while implementing those or other activities within the framework of the civil servant's professional development by studying independently or by taking all possible training or courses of professional development and retraining.

We believe that managerial skills are developed mainly during continuing application of basic management rules and principles. As V.I. Knorring states, "management principles determine the regularities of forming a managed system, its structure, methods of influencing people, motivation of the team members' behavior" [4].

Studying and mastering management skills is an important requirement in attaining managerial achievement. The content of management principles is the main aspect that a civil servant should know about management. In fact, knowledge of management principles refers to universal managerial knowledge because management principles are objective and are dependent on the desires and interests of specific people or their groups.

It should be understood that all the principles developed by science and confirmed in practice are only tools to tell the manager how to influence people in the right ways and what reactions should be expected from the controlling influencers. Ultimately, in management, everything depends on the manager's personality, interests, will, feelings, emotions, thinking, and even memory.

Over the past century, many management scientists and practitioners have attempted to develop universal management principles. However, the problem lies in, how to understand what exactly is meant by stating that these principles of management are universal, since we are aware that there is no absolute truth. In this connection, we can mention the authors of the following invaluable works in management science: "The Principles of Scientific Management" by Frederick Taylor, "The Twelve Productivity Principles" by Harrington Emerson, and "General and Industrial Management" by Henri Fayol.

To the 14 commonly known principles of management developed by Henri Fayol, already tested practically, were

added the principles of his follower Lindell Urwick, the principles of rational bureaucracy by Max Weber, and the organization principles by James Mooney and A.C. Rainey [7]. Undoubtedly, these general principles are the basis of management. Nevertheless, the sphere of their creation and application is production or manufacturing and its dominant businesses, to which these principles are directed.

The management principles, which ideally should be followed by civil servants, will include general principles developed by science based on the general principles and bringing universal meaning to the concept of "management", the essence of which was discussed above.

We adhere to the system of four universal management principles by E.A. Korolev:

- 1) the principle of the absolute priority for the management object over the subject;
- 2) the principle of priority of a global goal over any private or intermediate goal and also over their sum total, no matter how important they may appear to be;
- 3) the principle of the goal's absolute priority over a function;
- 4) the principle of the function's absolute priority and all their totality over a structure [8].

It is essential to understand that the management system in public civil service was created to implement state-authoritative relations for public purposes, where the management object is a person and his interests, abilities, and desires, as well as peoples' collectives. Hence, the legislature has enshrined the main principle of public civil service, the priority of rights and freedoms for person and citizen alike⁶.

The first principle obliges the manager to study the applicable management object: the public authority competence, its structure, positions, and the persons replacing them; to investigate formal and informal relations in the team, as well as external and internal factors influencing them. The second principle of management implies that the correct setting and application of the main goal is possible only when in possession of deep knowledge of the management object, its capabilities, and the resources

available. The third universal management principle lies in the fact that all activities of public authorities and their structural subdivisions may not exceed or contradict the previously set goals. The fourth principle concerns the organizational structure, which should change only when new tasks and new functions emerge, thereby ensuring that the global management goal is achieved. Maturing along with new functions, structural subdivisions, and governmental positions, it is easy to forget the assigned purpose of this or that management body.

Oftentimes, the structure and corresponding staff schedule are changed to save the management apparatus. However, the original functions of a certain body or division do not disappear. They begin to be redistributed among the remaining employees, not always applying an accompanying system of incentives, which can lead to an unequal load among civil servants, failures in work, and the emergence of conflict situations.

In addition to the above, the implementation of the fourth universal management principle in the civil service implies that personnel recruitment and selection will be based on the need to implement specific functions, works, and actions. The implementation of these principles is affected to a greater or lesser extent by management restrictions. These limitations are related not only to external conditions but also to the possibilities of the realization of internal abilities for the management object. Constant implementation in practice of the universal management rules discussed earlier will allow the formation of managerial skills of any manager.

A separate research topic should cover the following questions: who should evaluate these managerial skills, and what criteria should be set by experts to evaluate the managerial skills? Thus, we have discovered what the meaning of the term "managerial skills" and which managerial knowledge and skills should be included in the competence of a public civil servant from the "manager" category along with other civil servants exercising managerial functions.

We hope that this article will find some positive response from civil servants and help them in developing people's management skills.

⁶ Article 4 of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation No. 79-FZ of July 27, 2004 "On State Civil Service of the Russian Federation". URL: <http://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/12136354/paragraph/237301/doclist/18861> (accessed on September 01, 2021).

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