

## The Employees' Competence Development inside Organization: Managerial Solutions

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*This article deals with the issues of employees competence development inside the organization that should not be treated as a simple course of educational events, but strategically considered and lifelong process based on self-analysis, planning, monitoring and reflecting one's own and others' experience both in an individual way and in collaboration. The analysis of research literature indicated some lack of management solutions that help to integrate both non-formal and self-directed (informal) methods of competence development.*

*The first part of the article highlights the requirements the contemporary world of activity sets for employees with a special emphasis on transferable skills and personal traits. Alongside, the two possible ways of developing employees transferable skills inside organization are discussed. The first one is related to non-formal systematically organized training in organizations. The second one is informal, self-directed development of competence that is based on the theory of experiential learning and emphasizes employee's reflection skills.*

*The second part of the article is devoted to the discussion on the managerial solutions for developing employees' competence by combining both non-formal training and informal learning approaches. For this particular reason the theoretical model of developing employees' competence inside organization, which embraces the managerial solutions for both non-formal and informal competence development and highlights their interrelatedness, is presented.*

Keywords: *employees' competence development, transferable skills, non-formal training, informal learning, experiential learning.*

### Introduction

In contemporary knowledge and information society work activity becomes more complicated as knowledge rapidly gets out-of-date and the requirements for employees' competence constantly increase. That is why organizations are prompted to create the conditions for their employees that motivate them to involve into the lifelong learning process. This process is inevitable for dealing with the changes in the society as well as in the spheres of Lithuanian political, economical and social contexts. Lithuanian employees should assume that be-

ing a part of the European Union community they should be competent in working with people of different nationalities, religions, ages, etc. More than that, the employees and their organizations will have to meet the worldwide requirements and standards for competence.

The research literature has dealt with a great number of issues concerning the employees' competence development in organization. Competence as an object of analysis has been addressed in management, educational sciences, psychology and other social sciences. The scholars in human resource management especially discuss the topics related to employees' competence improvement. The latter are mostly related to training or non-formal teaching inside or outside the organization: G. Dessler (2003), J. Jr. Hite (1999), A. Sakalas (2003), M. G. Singer (1990), J. Stoner, E. R. Freeman, D. R. Gilbert (2000), etc. The research literature, however, presents a new approach to competence development in organization related to informal, self-directed learning based on collaboration and reflection: H. Leymann (1989), N. Longworth (1999), M. Pedler et al. (1991), P. Senge (1990), and others.

Nevertheless, there is insufficient attention to such management solutions that help to integrate both non-formal and self-directed (informal) ways of competence development inside the organization

Therefore, **the aim of the article** is to analyze the peculiarities and managerial solutions of employee competence development inside the organization.

The **object of the article** is employee's competence development. The scientific novelty of the article is that the theoretical model of developing employees' competence inside organization that integrates the managerial solutions for both non-formal and informal competence development is presented. The method of research literature analysis was employed.

The article consists of two parts. The first part is devoted for highlighting the peculiarities of non-formal and informal development of employees' competence with an emphasis on the importance of employees' transferable competencies. With respect to the peculiarities discussed, the theoretical model of competence development inside the organization, that embraces the managerial solutions for non-formal training and informal learning, is presented in the second part.

## The importance of employees' transferable competencies and the peculiarities of developing them in organization

The requirements for employees' of contemporary organizations do not match a definition of qualification any more, because the latter tends to describe the performing of certain functions. Instead, the concept of competence has gained its authority as the meaning of professional activity has undergone changes. As Jucevičienė and Lepaitė (2000) claim, competence is defined as the complex of individual's knowledge, abilities, skills, understanding, values, motives, personal traits that determine the effective positive result of the individual's concrete activity. The contexts of contemporary activity world demand for employees' proactive orientation, i.e. abilities to act in the unknown, unpredicted future situations. In this sense, the employees' abilities to learn, to perceive new situations and discern critical aspects of these situations, the interpersonal skills and transferable competencies become important.

Transferable skills or competencies are common for a big number of professional activity spheres. The main of them are competencies of communication, collaboration, group work/teamwork, critical thinking, information literacy, problem solving, etc. As B. Leonienė (2001) states, general competence or transferable skills are the complex of the main skills that are necessary for effective activity and could be applied in different spheres. P. Jucevičienė (2001) mentions such transferable competencies as communicating competency, working with information, teamwork skills, identification and solving the problems, working with people, planning and organizing, action researching and evaluation, project developing and implementation.

The empirical studies also put a great emphasis on the role of transferable competencies. For example, the Lithuanian Institute of Labour and Social Research carried out the longitudinal study (1996-2002), the part of which helped to reveal that employers assign the bigger importance to transferable competencies than to professional competence in a specific field of activity. The managers of organizations were asked what personal qualities and skills of their employees, especially the young ones, they consider insufficient.

The study results<sup>1</sup> showed that the employers expect more initiative from the young specialists (39,7 % of respondents, N=126). Accordingly, the other personal qualities that young employees usually lack in their workplace are:

- ✓ Responsibility – indicated by 34,9 % of employers
- ✓ Willingness to seriously work – 33,3 %
- ✓ Honesty and time management skills – 23 %
- ✓ Autonomy – 14,3 %
- ✓ Creativeness – 14,3%

The development of these components of competence mainly depends on the employees' willingness and self-motivation to improve them. These personal qualities

may be developed in the professional activity both in collaboration and acting on individual basis. The further results of the employers' survey indicated that transferable competencies or skills are preferred to professional skills. The importance of the latter was indicated only by 16,2% of respondents. The employers claimed that they needed employees with:

- ✓ Monitoring and result evaluation skills – 22,6 %
- ✓ Group work/ teamwork skills – 18,2 %
- ✓ Abilities to communicate with clients and contractors – 19,4%
- ✓ Management/administration skills – 18,5 %
- ✓ Conflict management skills – 12,7 %

It should be mentioned that every organization has its own specific requirements for employee's competence depending on its activity profile. It is obvious, however, that transferable competencies have gained importance in comparison to professional competence.

Transferable competencies of employee could be developed by formal and non-formal education as well as by informal learning. This article does not aim to analyze the peculiarities of formal education when an employee studies in higher school or vocational school as a full time student, attends evening classes or extramural studies. The further discussion is oriented to the ways of developing employee's competence *inside the organization*. Therefore, non-formal training and informal (self-directed) learning will be considered in this particular case. The process of non-formal education (in most texts it is named as non-formal training) is led by a lecturer, educator or consultant. This educational practice could be defined as a process that helps to eliminate the gaps between the existing and desirable knowledge, skills, abilities or attitudes. Non-formal training usually takes place next to the main systems of education and teaching. This kind of training is characteristic to the sphere of qualification improvement. Non-formal training could be carried out inside the organization, at workplace. After the training courses or seminars the trainees do not receive the diploma approved by the State; instead they receive a certificate or an official document that proves the fact of participation and/or some details of educational achievement.

Kaupinytė (2004) claims that the decisions on knowledge, skills and abilities an employee needs are made by an employee and his managers. First, the long-term and short-term organizational goals are defined; second, the objectives for subdivisions and departments are set, and, finally, the concrete requirements for an employee, who performs certain functions, are defined. Undoubtedly, the matching of employee and organization's interests has a big influence on training results.

When the organizational learning needs are identified, the professionals in human resource management or the staff in personnel department should decide upon the most suitable teaching method (Stoner, Freeman, Gilbert, 2000). Managers essentially learn by doing. This involves a great number of methods: job rotation and lateral promotion, enriched job responsibilities, job instruction training, apprentice training, coaching, mentoring and committee assignments, etc. (Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield,

<sup>1</sup> The detailed research report is presented at [www.gunsi.lt](http://www.gunsi.lt). The Institute of Labour and Social Research.

1995). Away – from-the job techniques are employed to train and develop employees away from their jobs. Some of these training programmes may be held off the organization; some of the in-house training programmes are conducted inside the organization, within the organization's own training facilities, classrooms.

According to R.Appleby (2003), the different types of training methods should be applied for all the members of organization. This is a way to obtain more knowledge on new technologies, working methods and to widen the scope of human understanding. A. Stankevičienė (2004) argues that in reality some methods of training are combined. The most important thing, however, is to match the management interest in training with the individual interests of employee.

The analysis of research literature reveals that one of the most important factors influencing competence development in organization is the organizational-managerial environment. D.Boud and N.Solomon (2001) summarize the characteristics of such an organizational-managerial environment: clearly defined and declared in public the organization's commitment to learning and members' development; the organizational resources allocated for learning; the experience of collaboration with other organizations striving for employees' learning; the investment in infrastructure for learning support; the clearly defined career possibilities; attention to members' ideas on organizational development and the encouragement to submit these ideas; organization's ability to create learning partnerships with different educational institutions.

So, the research on employees' learning and competence development in the organization emphasises the importance of interaction and the support from the higher levels of management. L.Caley (2001) assumes that material resources are also crucial alongside the support from managers, educators and colleagues: time resources allocated for learning; learning resources such as information technologies, literature, evaluation of learning activity and feedback.

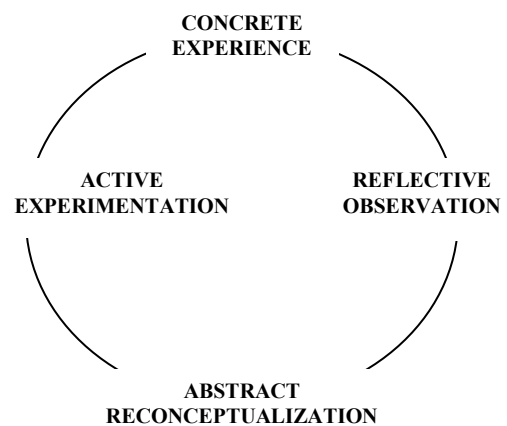
*Employees' competence development based on informal learning (new learning) approach.* Along with the formal and non-formal training of employees the research literature emphasizes new possibilities for competence development that are related to such concepts as *new learning, self-directed learning and learning organization* (Jucevičienė, Stanikūnienė, 2003; Longworth, 1999; Senge, 1990; Pedler et al., 1991).

These concepts highlight the contemporary approach to competence development or learning that embraces the individual's reflection on and transforming his/her own practice. According to these authors, learning in organization is defined as the constant reasoning and inquiry into the existing experience and the perspectives of activity. The data of this reflective process are transformed into the knowledge that is significant for attaining the main organizational goals and is accessible for all members of organization. It is worth mentioning that these processes are carried out in all the organizational levels: individual level, group and organizational levels as well as in all organizational spheres – the activity of managers, professionals, unqualified workers and other employees.

The competence development like this is not a mere exchange of textbook knowledge. This is an exchange of personal knowing, activity experience and understandings while reflecting on them and discussing them. In this respect an employee learns from his colleague's experience by means of communicating and collaborating. The attitude should be fostered that human learning does not end with the graduation of educational institution, instead, he is actively learning in his daily life.

Naturally, the question arises, why we should learn from our experience and in what ways an employee could achieve this. The experience of each individual contains invaluable knowing. If this implicit knowing is brought into conscious level by reflecting, it may enable a person for a successful activity. Sutherland (1998) gives an excellent example about the student teachers who learn for their future profession by using their personal experience about bringing their own children, i.e. they extract their tacit knowing about performing the roles of parents.

Therefore, a new approach to developing employee's competence has a grounded methodological framework: *the theory of experiential learning* by Kolb (1984). The theory of experiential learning defines learning as a knowledge building process when the transformation of one's experience occurs. New knowledge is created when we combine our existing understanding and the transformed experience. The theory of experiential learning describes two dialectically related ways of understanding the experience (in other words, the search for meaning in experience): *concrete experience and abstract reconceptualization*; as well as two ways of transforming the experience: *reflective observation and active experimentation* (see the figure).



**Figure.** The cycle of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984)

Each individual (an employee) accumulates *concrete experience*. So, while acting he obtains new experience which can be *reflected* and evaluated from the different points of view. Later on, an individual “works” with new ideas: reconstructs them, logically integrates them into the existing concepts and understanding or absolutely transforms his present understanding and personal action theories. All these processes occur on the *abstract reconceptualization* stage. A new knowing is tested in new activity situations (*active experimentation*), and, again, it becomes new experience that should be reflected on.

Therefore, the reflection skills become essential for an individual employee. The use of reflection in one's daily activity is a multistage process that starts with the evaluation of individual's actions, goals and activity means or tools and finishes with the public analysis on personal attitudes, values, the ways of reasoning, etc. An individual aims to evaluate the opinions of other people, their ideas or the interpretations of a certain problem. In this respect the alternative solutions, different and even conflicting views are taken into account. An individual compares his own activity with the ways of acting used by other people. New information or knowledge expands human understanding and the space for reflective inquiry and in that way urges to ask the questions that make an individual to challenge the existing situation, the habitual ways of acting, attitudes or values ("Why am I doing like this and what for?"). Aiming to develop his competence, an organization employee should reflect on the following questions: "Why do I perform my work effectively?" "What my personal knowledge, skills, personal traits let me to effectively perform my work?" "What should I improve?" "What competence do I lack?" "How should I perform my work more effectively?" "How should I achieve this?", etc.

A number of authors (Brown, 1988; Resnick, 1987 and others) emphasize collaboration as an essential feature of effective learning, because learners construct new meanings and understanding by sharing knowledge. Usually this learning takes place in collective activity, for example, project development or in solving a complicated problem/ task that requires the competence of several people. This process is characterized by the exchange of opinions, discussions upon their inconsistencies, debates on personal understandings, etc. As Brown (1988) states, during such social interaction where people have to discuss, argue, explain and defend their points of view, a big probability exists that the transformation of individual's understanding will take place. During the collaboration based learning the following attitude is important: the contrasting approaches or the points of view are the alternatives for investigation, but not the conflicting perspectives that should be avoided.

Therefore, one of the managerial solutions for developing employees' competence inside organization is related to organizing and encouraging the collaborative learning. The collaboration culture does not tolerate group thinking, on the contrary, it fosters the critical evaluation and the diversity of opinions (Fullan, 1998). Senge (1990, 1994) emphasizes learning in teams that aim for finding a solution for a particular problem or improving the organization. The effective collaboration is characterized by the learning partnerships, consultancy, inquiry while acting, collegial advice or professional dialogue, planning, monitoring and feedback. According to Fullan (1998), members of organization should feel mutual trust and support, they should not be afraid to share their doubts and discuss problems; asking for advice should not be treated as incompetence. More than that, a contemporary approach to learning argues that mistakes are the learning possibilities. Learning from mistakes helps to take responsibility and never repeat them in the future. Consequently, managers of organization should

encourage the employees to openly discuss their failures and, in turn, should not blame and punish them for the mistakes.

Summing up, the contemporary informal learning approach reveals that the development of employees' competence inside organization is not a sequence of fragmental educational events; instead it is a lifelong process of improving competence based on self-analysis, planning, monitoring and reflecting one's own and others' experience both in an individual way and in collaboration.

### **The managerial solutions for developing employees' competence inside organization: a theoretical model**

The research literature analysis revealed that both non-formal and informal (self-directed) ways of developing employees' competence are described by different characteristics. In the first case, the competence development should be systematic in nature and managed by the training (teaching) staff. In the second case, the course of competence development events mainly depends on employee's initiative and learning motivation as well as his skills of reflection and inquiry. It is not related to the systematically organized teaching and learning. Therefore, the managerial solutions applied for both types of competence development have their own peculiarities.

While discussing the non-formal way of competence development inside organization, the researchers used to present either the training models applied in organizations or the stages of organizing the training system. In this respect we agree with B. Česnulevičienė and J.Lakis (2002) who claim that the process of carrying out training from the managerial point of view should be considered according to three criteria: *systematic approach, purposefulness and efficiency*. The systematic approach to training is maintained by constructing long-term personnel training plans that are specified in concrete time periods and their implementation is regularly monitored. The regulations of organization have to clearly define training as an underlying sphere that fosters organizational maturity. The purposefulness of training is based on organizational strategic goals and the competence development needs defined for organizational subdivisions or for an individual employee (e.g. a manager). B. Česnulevičienė and J.Lakis (2002) argue that the problem of training efficiency is being solved by selecting training programs with high quality methods and problem-based learning approach as well as by forming targeted trainees' groups. These authors claim that one additional standard of efficiency is a favorable, collaboration based environment that enables employees to practically apply the obtained knowledge and skills. In that way, we suppose, not only practical application, but also the dissemination of new competence within the organization should be discussed.

Moreover, training is affected by the group and individual motivation. The motivational system in organization is made of the reward for ongoing developing of competence, career opportunities and the organizational attitudes on innovations and renovation. If the development of competence opens new career perspectives, recognition and increased salary, an employee may crea-

tively exploit the learning possibilities that are offered by organization by devoting his leisure time and even using his personal resources.

The research literature analysis (Česnulevičienė, Lakis, 2002; Dessler, 2002; Leymann, 1989; Sakalas, 2003; Singer, 1990, and others) enables to present this ***theoretical model of developing employees' competence inside organization*** that embraces the managerial solutions for both non-formal and informal competence development and highlights their interrelatedness.

The first component of this model is "*The Formation of Positive Organizational Attitudes to Learning*". This is an initial stage that connects the organizing of non-formal training and informal learning. As different researchers state (Pedler, Burgoyne, Boydell, 1991; Senge, 1990 and others), the common understanding should prevail in organization (some authors name it as a part of organizational culture) that learning and development of employees' competence is an organizational value. This understanding embraces such attitudes as: *mistakes are learning sources and not the subject to be punished for; opinion differences are a valuable learning source; innovations and changes demand for learning; collaboration and employees' initiative should be fostered; a manager is a consultant who encourages the development of employees' competence, etc.* The formation of these attitudes is a long-term process where all the members of organization should take part. The attitudes that support learning in organization could be externalized and visualized, for example, they could be incorporated in organizational vision, mission, strategic goals and/or declared in public advertising campaigns, logos, stands or newsletters (if an organization issues its own newsletter).

The second component of the model "*The Evaluation of Employees' Motivational Factors*" defines the evaluation of different motivators that influence employees' decision to develop competence. Some employees could be motivated by the career perspectives; others decide to engage into learning because of the possibilities to earn more respect or recognition. The evaluation of employees' learning motivation could be carried out by organization's staff, namely the professionals in human resource management; another possibility is to hire external consultants or experts. After having evaluated the factors that stimulate employees' for developing their competence, the design of learning supportive climate within organization should be modeled accordingly. For example, if the employees assign a great significance to manager's role in assessing their performance and giving the recognition they deserve, then, the following actions should be taken into consideration: to create organizational conditions for self-analysis; the results of employees' self-analysis should be considered by their managers; to train and encourage employees to submit not only formal report on their performance results, but also to present their personal opinions, attitudes and/or ideas; to train managers to give a constructive critics to employees and to award them in case of their success.

The two preceding components of the theoretical model are essential for both non-formal and informal competence development inside organization. Meanwhile, the perspective of non-formal competence devel-

opment consists of four main stages to be discussed in detail. This four-stage system, according to M.G.Singer (1990), helps to avoid the incoherence in training process and ensures the repayment of investments. Many authors agree (Česnulevičienė, Lakis, 2002; Dessler, 2002; Leymann, 1989; Sakalas, 2003; Singer, 1990 and others) that the first step in organizing the non-formal training of employees is *the identification and classification of training/learning needs*. The analysis of training (learning) needs is carried out on both individual and organizational level; the employee's performance appraisals are conducted on this stage. Therefore, the following issues have to be determined: if there is a need to implement training and carry out learning; if an organization has sufficient technical, educational, financial resources to implement training; what employees' are identified for training. Moreover, the following questions should be taken into consideration: *What are the ways of performing? What obstacles exist for performing work more effectively? What are the essential factors that ensure the successful performance? What strengths should be reinforced and what weaknesses should be eliminated? What skills, knowledge do workers, specialists and managers lack? Is communication and feedback ensured in all the organizational levels?* etc. Moreover, as M.R. Carrell et al. (1995) argue, employee involvement is important because a feeling of participation in the assessment process enhances employee motivation to undergo training. Second, management involvement is also important because supervisors generally have accurate information about their employees' performance and are in an excellent position to assess the need for training.

In the second stage of the four-stage non-formal competence development of employees the training goals are established, which are defined by qualitative and quantitative criteria indicating the organizational expectations from the training to be conducted. This stage was named as "*Defining the goals for competence development*". The goals and the objectives of the training should indicate the levels of skills, knowledge, abilities and attitudes the participant should possess after the training has been completed. Alongside with the goal setting, the potential groups of trainees should be selected.

The third stage of non-formal competence development named as "*The Selection or Design of Training Program and Process*" emphasizes the necessity to choose the training program that best suits the training goals defined. The attention is devoted to selecting the relevant teaching forms and methods and the developing of training evaluation criteria. The organization should consider the training staff who conducts training as well as the administrators who are also responsible for the successful implementation of training process. On this particular stage it is worth considering the possibility to prepare the *trainers' teams* from the employees who would be able to train and consult other employees on issues of reflective inquiry and self-directed learning after the training has been accomplished. The professionals in human resources management, the staff of human resource management department or people in organization responsible for staffing, training and career management could be appointed as such trainers. The re-

search literature often calls them as *facilitators*. Leymann (1989) points out the importance of their role in learning. They teach employees to become the equal partners, to get rid of such stereotypes as “I cannot”, “I do not know how”, “I will be not able to”. By means of reflection, facilitators help employees to evaluate what they already know, what they are able to perform, what they should learn. In that way the self-confidence is promoted, and this, in turn, encourages responsibility for one’s actions and activity as a whole.

The comfortable learning environment should be created and maintained in the course of training process. Managers, in turn, have to ensure the employees have possibilities to apply new knowledge and skills in real work contexts. The last step of non-formal competence development of employees is the evaluation of the whole training program. The managers have to determine whether trainees actually learned new skills and attitudes, to assess the extent to which the objectives were met, and to find out the extent to which new knowledge and skills are applied in a workplace. These data are important for making cost-benefit analysis of training system and suggesting further improvements. This stage of “*Training/Learning Evaluation and Feedback*” aims to compare the actual and planned results, to detect the training problems and their reasons and to return to each preceding stage of non-formal competence development. The evaluation is based on the criteria developed in advanced in the stage of “*The Selection or Design of Training Program and Process*”. The adequate evaluation strategies should be applied not only at the final stage of training, but also at the intermediate stages. Consequently, the teaching and learning experience gained during the non-formal development of competence could be applied for stimulating employees’ informal (self-directed) learning. For example, during non-formal training the trainees are taught how to construct their competence portfolios and compile their competence facts; later on they are able to personally develop this activity without supervision.

The second big section of *theoretical model of developing employees’ competence inside organization* is devoted to the managerial solutions for informal development of competence that consists of three main components: “*The Development of Positive Learning Climate*”, “*The Dissemination of Employees’ Knowledge and Ideas within the Organization*”, “*The Storage of Employees’ Competence*”. It is worth mentioning that the managerial experience gained during the informal development of employees’ competence could be applied in the implementation of training courses, seminars at the same organization. This is reflected in the component “*Training/Learning Evaluation and Feedback*” that is a binder for all other elements in the model.

The development of favorable learning climate is quite a complicated task for organizational managers. In this regard, the creation of adequate learning conditions in a classroom is not enough. We argue for the learning climate which prevails in the whole organization (Pedler, Burgoyne, Boydell, 1991; Senge, 1990; Senge, Ross, Smith, Roberts, Kleiner, 1994; Simonaitienè, 2001) and enables employees to experiment, explore their practice

and learn from experience. The employees are allowed to risk and make mistakes which are assumed as learning possibilities; therefore, new ideas and innovations are welcomed. One of the managerial guidelines is to apply the management style that favours and supports learning and competence development. Democratic, collegial style of management promotes collaboration. In this case, the management has to constantly inquire into employees’ performance results, to encourage them to present their personal views on various organizational issues, starting with the concrete tasks and finishing with the strategic management questions. Managers have to set a good example of ongoing competence development.

Moreover, managers should consider the real financial aid for employees’ competence development. For instance, each employee could have his own “money bag for learning”, i.e. even a small part of finances is allocated to an employee every month under the obligation to purposively use it for learning aims and to give the account on this learning. An employee has to have enough freedom to choose teaching/learning methods and content as well as to accumulate these means for several months if the desirable courses or private lessons are quite expensive. Considering the perspective of collaboration, organization members should foster the tradition to share and disseminate new knowledge and skills, for instance, by organizing informal discussions with the colleagues of department.

So, at this point we consider the next element in the model: “*The Dissemination of Employees’ Knowledge and Ideas within the Organization*”. The employees’ dispositions and abilities to exchange the information have a great significance. Two persons can share the information and in that way to enrich their experience. The process is called as inner exchanges. The managerial solutions, however, should be related to effective communication system within the organization that ensures a proper information flow and access. More than that, the adequate dissemination of knowledge is influenced by the properly distributed work load with the time left for discussions and considerations; informal environment (for example, rest rooms) for chatting with colleagues; the opportunity to use information technologies are also important.

The contemporary research on organizational and human resource management emphasizes that the employees’ competence should be recorded in the organizational memory. The storage of employees’ competence would enable to develop organizational knowledge and “knowledge bank” in organization when individual’s personal knowledge remains after an employee has left the organization (however, this is not a research object of this article). On the individual level we refer to the formation of employee’s competence portfolio. Competence portfolio is a collection of representative facts and works that prove individual’s competence. In this sense, the competence portfolio may contain different documentation (certificates, diploma, references, evaluation forms, etc.), scientific works, inventions, learning contracts, plans, learning logs and other facts (McGill, Beaty, 1999). In other words, competence portfolio should present a tangible evidence of individual’s successful experience, achievements and development activity.

Competence portfolio becomes a source for reflection in two ways. First, the building of competence portfolio is a complicated, intellectually stimulating process based on reflective reasoning and self-analysis. An individual has to analyze his roles and performance, to understand the way he works and learns, to think *why* he should include one or another fact of his activity. The professionally prepared competence portfolio implies the individual's reasoning, problem solving, self-evaluation, learning activity that is not assessed in a formal way. Second, the collected facts of individual's competence are the source for his further reflection that aims to define the competence gaps and the priorities for future learning. More than that, competence portfolio may be considered as a useful tool for communicating with colleagues and sharing knowledge. The content of competence portfolio becomes the object of discussions on the performance quality; the employees can compare and discuss the best examples of their practice. As it was mentioned above, the building of competence portfolio should be taught and managed by the experts in order the employees would be able to do it on their own.

Summing up, the research literature has mainly emphasized the managerial strategies for non-formal development of employees' competence both inside and outside the organization. Meanwhile, despite the increased emphasis on the significance of informal (self-directed) development of competence based on reflection skills and collaborating, there is a lack of more systematic managerial efforts. Therefore, the presented theoretical model of developing employees' competence in organization integrates the managerial solutions for both non-formal training and informal learning inside organization.

## Conclusions

The analysis of research literature revealed that the contemporary world of activity emphasizes the requirements for employees that consider the importance of developing transferable skills or competencies and such personal traits as autonomy, honesty, initiative, etc.

The theoretical analysis of employees' transferable skills highlights the two ways of developing them inside the organization. The first one is related to the non-formal, systematically organized training (teaching), when a certificate is awarded to an employee with a proof and details of some educational achievements or facts. Meanwhile, a new alternative of employees' competence development calls for reflective learning from ones' own activity and other people's experience by exchanging the understandings and personal knowing through communication and collaboration. This informal (self-directed) way of employees' competence development demands less financial resources of organization, but it requires a favorable environment that fosters collaboration, the support from management, the emotionally safe psychological climate and the organizational conditions for knowledge sharing and dissemination.

Aiming for the effective employees' competence development inside organization, it is advisable to apply the theoretical model that embraces the managerial solutions for both non-formal and informal ways of develop-

ing employees' competence. *"The Formation of Positive Organizational Attitudes to Learning"* is an initial stage where employees' understanding on the importance and benefits of competence development is built in all the organizational levels. The second stage emphasizes the *evaluation of employees' motivational factors* that stimulate for competence development. The four main stages of non-formal development of competence, which emphasize the role of educators in employees' training, should be implemented in the following sequence: *the identification and classification of training/learning needs; the goal setting for competence development; the selection or design of training programs and process, the implementation of training.* The model component named as *"Training/learning Evaluation and Feedback"* is an element that interlinks both ways of competence development, enables to come back to each stage of the model and to relate learning experience that is obtained during training and informal learning. In parallel with the four stages of non-formal development of competence an organization should support and encourage the self-directed, informal learning of employee that is based on employee's initiative and learning efforts. The theoretical model suggests three main managerial solutions for ensuring the informal way of developing employee's competence: *the development of positive learning climate, the dissemination of employees' knowledge and ideas within the organization, the storage of employees' competence.*

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### **Darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymas organizacijoje: vadybiniai sprendimai**

Santrauka

Šiuolaikinėje žinių ir informacijos visuomenėje kinta ir sudėtingėja darbo veikla, o priimami sprendimai neretai turi didelę reikšmę ne tik darbo organizacijos nariams, bet ir išorinei organizacijos aplinkai. Taigi reikalavimai dirbančiųjų kompetencijai taip pat didėja ir, kas ypač problemiška, nuolat kinta. Iš darbuotojo reikalaujama nuolat tobulėti: plėsti ir gilinti žinias, ugdyti įgūdžius ir remtis darbo bei asmeninėmis vertybėmis. Todėl labai svarbu, kad organizacija sudarytų sąlygas ir patys darbuotojai būtų motyvuoti įsitraukti į nuolatinio mokymosi procesą. Tai skatina ne tik kintanti visuomenė, bet ir Lietuvos politinis, ekonominis, socialinis kontekstas, kuris rodo, kad darbuotojams tenka dirbti su skirtingų rasių, tautybės, amžiaus, lyties ir orientacijos žmonėmis, o Lietuvai stengiantis tapti lygiaverte ES nare, organizacijos bei jų darbuotojai susidurs su europiniais kompetencijos reikalavimais bei standartais.

Įvairūs darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo organizacijoje aspektai analizuojami ir aptariami daugelyje mokslinių publikacijų. Kompetencija kaip tyrimo objektas yra aktuali vadybos, ugdymo, psichologijos ir kitų socialinių mokslo šakų tyrinėtojų tema. Itin didelio tyrėjų dėmesio, ypač žmogiškųjų išteklių vadybos srityje, susilaukia darbuotojų tobulinimo aspektai, siejami su organizuotu neformaliu mokymu(si) tiek organizacijų viduje (darbo vietoje), tiek ir už jų ribų (Dessler, 2003; Hite, 1999; Sakalas, 2003; Singer, 1990; Stoner, Freeman, Gilbert, 2000 ir kt.). Mokslinėje literatūroje kaip atsvara

neformaliu organizuotam kompetencijos vystymui išryškėja naujas požiūris – savaiminis (informalus), bendradarbiavimo veikla paremtas darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymas (Leymann, 1989; Pedler ir kt., 1991; Senge, 1990; Longworth, 1999 ir kt.) Vis dėlto, mokslinėje literatūroje nepavyko aptikti tokių vadybinių sprendimų, kurie integruotų tiek savaiminį, tiek neformalų darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo būdus organizacijoje.

Todėl straipsnio **tikslas** – išanalizuoti darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo organizacijoje ypatumus ir vadybines galimybes.

**Tyrimo objektas** – darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymas. Straipsnio mokslinis naujumas tas, kad pateiktas teorinis darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo organizacijoje modelis, integruojantis tiek neformalaus, tiek savaiminio mokymosi organizacijoje vadybinius sprendimus. Straipsnyje naudotas *tyrimo metodas* – *mokslinės literatūros analizė*.

*Pirmoje straipsnio dalyje išryškunami* neformalaus ir informalaus (savaiminio) darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo ypatumai, akcentuojant darbuotojų bendrųjų kompetencijų svarbą. *Antroji straipsnio dalis* skirta teorinio darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo organizacijoje modeliui pagrįsti, integruojant tiek neformalaus, tiek informalaus (savaiminio) mokymosi vadybinius sprendimus.

Mokslinės literatūros analizė atskleidė, kad šiuolaikiniame veiklos pasaulyje keliami reikalavimai darbuotojų kompetencijai ypatingą reikšmę suteikia bendrųjų kompetencijų arba perkeliamųjų gebėjimų (bendradarbiavimo, darbo grupėje/komandoje, konfliktų sprendimo, informacinio raštingumo, kritinio mąstymo, problemų sprendimo, komunikacinių ir pan.) vystymui bei asmenybės savybėms (sąžiningumas, savarankiškumas, iniciatyvumas ir pan.). Bendrosios kompetencijos daugeliu atvejų svarbumo požiūriu vertinamos labiau už profesinius gebėjimus.

Teorinė – koncepcinė darbuotojų bendrųjų kompetencijų analizė leidžia išryškinti du jų vystymo organizacijose būdus: neformalų ir informalų.

Neformaliu mokymo procesui vadovauja dėstytojas, lektorius, konsultantas ir pan. Tokį mokymą galima būtų apibrėžti kaip procesą, kuris padeda įveikti trūkumą tarp esamų ir reikalingų žinių, įgūdžių, sugebėjimų ar nuostatų. Neformalus mokymas paprastai vyksta šalia pagrindinių švietimo ir mokymo sistemų. Jis būdingas kvalifikacijos tobulinimo sričiai. Neformalus mokymas(is) gali būti teikiamas pačioje darbo organizacijoje, darbo vietoje, įvairių kursų, seminarų formomis. Valstybės pripažinti diplomai neišduodami, tačiau žmogus gali gauti pažymėjimą ar sertifikatą, patvirtinantį mokymosi faktą.

Tuo tarpu naujas šiuolaikinis požiūris į darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymą siejamas su tokiais koncepcijomis kaip *naujasis mokymasis, savaiminis mokymasis bei besimokanti organizacija* (Jucevičienė, Stanikūnienė, 2003; Longworth, 1999; Senge, 1990; Pedler, ir kt. 1991). Tai mokymasis iš savo ir kitų kolegų veiklos patirties, keičiantis savo turimu asmeniniu žinojimu ir savo supratimu per bendravimą ir bendradarbiavimą. Toks šiuolaikinis kompetencijos vystymas arba mokymasis vyksta reflektuojant savo praktiką, ją apmąstant ir keičiant – tuo sudarant naujos patirties įgijimo bei mokymosi galimybes. Mokymasis organizacijoje, pasak minėtų autorių, reiškia nuolatinį veiklos perspektyvų ir tyrimo patirties apmąstymą ir tyrimą bei šio proceso metu gautų duomenų transformavimą į žinias, reikšmingas organizacijos esminiems tikslams pasiekti bei priinamas visiems organizacijos nariams.

Naujasis požiūris į darbuotojo kompetencijos vystymą turi tvirtą mokslinį metodologinį pagrindą – *patirtinio mokymosi teoriją*, sukurta mokslininko Kolb (1984). Patirtinio mokymosi teorija apibūdina mokymąsi kaip procesą, kurio metu žinios kuriamos transformuojant savo patirtį. Naujos žinios „gimsta“ derinant patirties supratimą ir jos transformavimą.

Atlikta mokslinės literatūros analizė rodo, kad neformalus ir informalus (savaiminis) darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo būdai išsiskiria savo charakteristikomis. Pirmuoju atveju kompetencijos vystymas turi būti mokymo(si) specialistų organizuotas ir sistemingas, o antruoju atveju kompetencijos vystymo vyksmas labiau priklauso nuo paties darbuotojo mokymosi motyvacijos, turimų refleksijos ir veiklos tyrimo gebėjimų, tačiau jis nesiejamas su organizuotu mokymu(si). Taigi šiems kompetencijos vystymo būdams

taikomi vadybiniai sprendimai irgi turi savų ypatumų.

Siekiant efektyvaus darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymo organizacijoje, tikslinga remtis pagrįstu teoriniu modeliu, kuris apima tiek neformalaus, tiek informalaus kompetencijos vystymo vadybinius sprendimus.

Pirmoji šio modelio sudedamoji dalis – „*Organizacinių mokymų palaikančių nuostatų formavimas*“ yra pradinis etapas, siejantis ir neformalaus, ir informalaus mokymo(si) organizavimą. Organizacijoje turi vyrėti bendras supratimas (kai kas tai įvardija kaip organizacijos kultūros dalį), kad mokymasis ir darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymas yra vertybė.

Antrasis modelio elementas – „*Motyvacinių veiksmų įvertinimas*“. Tai įvairių motyvatorių kompetencijai tobulinti įvertinimas. Vienus darbuotojus skatina sudarytos galimybės karjerai, kitus – pripažinimo arba pagarbos poreikiai. Darbuotojų mokymosi motyvacijos įvertinimą gali atlikti organizacijos pajėgos, pavyzdžiui, žmoniškųjų išteklių specialistai arba pakviesti išoriniai konsultantai, kurie yra šios srities ekspertai.

Keturi esminiai neformalaus kompetencijos vystymo etapai, akcentuojantys edukatoriaus, mokymo specialisto vaidmenį darbuotojo mokyme, turi būti įgyvendinami jų pateikimo seka: *mokymosi poreikių ekspertavimas ir klasifikacija; kompetencijos tobulinimo tikslų nustatymas; mokymo programų/mokymo proceso parinkimas arba projektavimas; mokymo(si) vykdymas*.

Pirmame etape nustatomas ne tik individualaus darbuotojo kompetencijos vystymo poreikis, bet ir įvertinama jo veikla, organizacijos

poreikių analizė. Ištiriama, ar egzistuoja mokymo(si) poreikis, ar organizacija turės pakankamai finansinių ir techninių išteklių šiems poreikiams patenkinti, ir tai, kuriems darbuotojams reikalingas mokymas. Antrame etape nustatomi tikslai, kuriuos apibūdina kiekybiniai ir kokybiniai kriterijai, rodantys, ko organizacija tikisi iš mokymo. Šiame etape tikslinga atrinkti potencialias besimokančiųjų darbuotojų grupes, kurios dalyvaus mokymuose. Trečiame etape parenkama arba suprojektuojama tokia mokymo programa, kuri geriausiai atitinka užsibrėžtus tikslus. Didelį dėmesį reikėtų sutelkti į mokymo formų, metodų parinkimą bei mokymo vertinimo kriterijų sukūrimą.

*Įvertinimo ir grįžtamosios informacijos* sudedamoji dalis – tai abu kompetencijos vystymo būdus susiejantis ryšys, įgalinantis grįžti į kiekvieną modelio etapą bei susieti skirtingais būdais įgytą mokymo ir mokymosi patirtį. Šis etapas padeda palyginti gautus rezultatus su lauktaisiais, išsiaiškinti mokymo metu atsiradusias problemas bei jų priežastis ir sugrįžti į kiekvieną etapą koreguoti. Šiame etape remiamasi iš anksto sudarytais vertinimo kriterijais.

Kartu su minėtais keturiais neformalaus kompetencijos vystymo etapais organizacijoje turi būti skatinamas ir palaikomas savaiminis darbuotojo *mokymasis*, grindžiamas paties darbuotojo iniciatyva ir mokymosi pastangomis. Tai apima tris esminius vadybinius sprendimus: *palankaus mokymosi klimato kūrimas; darbuotojų įgytų žinių bei idėjų sklaida; darbuotojų kompetencijos saugojimas*.

Raktažodžiai: *darbuotojų kompetencijos vystymas, perkeliameji gebėjimai, neformalus mokymas, informalus (savaiminis) mokymasis, patirtinis mokymasis*.

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