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**MANAGING EMPLOYEES IN ORGANIZATIONS
VIA LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

Contemporary challenges facing modern organization force its management to deal with changes, projects, innovations or start-ups. To maintain competitive advantages, it is important to develop skills necessary to solve emerging problems. The paper aims to discuss these issues. The authors have attempted to reveal leadership skills that are primarily needed to manage organizations effectively. This study applies the significance of soft skills. This study also identifies what skills should be perceived as soft ones.

The purpose of scientific research is to study the degree of awareness concerning the soft skills concept among Kazakhstani employees. The theory of leadership generalizes the practical experience of hundreds and thousands of people. Without a theoretical foundation, it is difficult to develop leadership skills that are in demand today. Modern organizations to improve their effectiveness should focus on developing leadership skills, in particular soft skills, which are a reflection of the organization's culture and strategy. Training of personnel, raising its awareness and implementing a program of leadership effectiveness are further directions of the research.

Due to the selected survey approach the data are correlational and can be perceived as reliable but exploratory one. Thus, representative experimental data is needed to confirm the findings.

A cross-sectional survey design with an n = 155 employed people working for various organizations was selected. The research consisted of two stages. The first stage of the research was conducted on the base of exploratory research design. Secondary data presented in the literature review helped to propose two hypotheses. The comprehensive analysis of secondary data helped to interpret primary data with more insight.

The initial prediction was that that low awareness leads to poor performance of any activity where people interact. Findings taken from online survey showed that the most Kazakhstani respondents (83%) are not informed about soft skills and as a result pay less attention to enhance them.

The presented results present an important step toward understanding how Kazakhstani employees could increase the personal performance via increasing awareness of soft skills.

Within the paper, the discussion focuses on the importance to increase awareness on the soft skills among Kazakhstani entrepreneurs, businesspersons and employees to expand boundaries of career opportunities.

Key words: soft and hard skills, leadership, innovators, start-up, change, project, capability, team.

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Көшбасшылық дағдылар арқылы ұйымдардағы қызметкерлерді басқару

Заманауи ұйымның алдында тұрған қазіргі заманғы проблемалар, оның көшбасшылығын өзгерістерге, жобаларға, инновацияларға немесе стартаптарға айналдыруға мәжбүр етеді. Бәсекелестік артықшылықтарды қолдау үшін пайда болған проблемаларды шешуге қажетті дағдыларды дамыту маңызды. Осы құжаттың мақсаты осы мәселелерді талқылау. Авторлар

ең алдымен ұйымдарды тиімді басқару үшін қажетті көшбасшылық дағдыларды анықтауға тырысты. Бұл зерттеу жұмсақ дағдылардың құндылығын пайдаланады. Бұл зерттеу сондай-ақ қандай дағдыларды жұмсақ деп қабылдану керектігін анықтайды.

Зерттеудің мақсаты қазақстандық қызметкерлер арасында жұмсақ дағдылар тұжырымдамасы туралы хабардарлық деңгейін зерттеу болып табылады. Жетекшілік теориясы жүздеген және мыңдаған адамдардың практикалық тәжірибесін жинақтайды. Теориялық негізде бүгінгі таңда талап етілетін көшбасшылық қасиеттерді дамыту қиын. Заманауи ұйымдар тиімділікті жоғарылату үшін көшбасшылық дағдыларды дамытуға, атап айтқанда, ұйымның мәдениеті мен стратегиясын көрсететін ақыл-ой дағдыларына бағытталуы керек. Қызметкерлерді оқыту, олардың хабардарлығын көтеру және басқару тиімділігін арттыру бойынша бағдарламаны жүзеге асыру зерттеудің қосымша бағыттары болып табылады.

Таңдалған зерттеу әдісіне сүйене отырып, зерттеу деректерін сенімді деп санауға болады, бірақ іздеу. Осылайша, нәтижелерді растау үшін өкілетті эксперименттік деректер қажет.

Әртүрлі ұйымдарда жұмыс істейтін $n = 155$ адамды қамтитын кросс-секциялық зерттеулер жүргізілді. Зерттеу екі кезеңнен тұрды. Зерттеудің бірінші кезеңі сапалы зерттеулердің қайталама ақпараты негізінде жүргізілді. Әдебиеттерді шолуда ұсынылған қосалқы деректер екі гипотезаны ұсынуға көмектесті. Қосымша деректерді жан-жақты талдау бастапқы деректерді жақсы түсінуге көмектесті.

Алғашқы болжам, төмен білу, адамдар өзара әрекеттесетін кез-келген әрекеттің нашар нәтижесіне әкеледі. Онлайн-сауалнама қорытындысы бойынша Қазақстандағы респонденттердің басым бөлігі (83%) жұмсақ дағдылар туралы білмейді және соның салдарынан олардың сапасын жақсартуға аз назар аударады.

Ұсынылған нәтижелер икемді дағдылар туралы хабардарлықты арттыру арқылы қазақстандық қызметкерлердің жеке өнімділігін арттыра алатындығын түсіну үшін маңызды қадам болып табылады.

Талқылау қазақстандық кәсіпкерлер, кәсіпкерлер мен қызметкерлер арасында мансаптық мүмкіндіктердің шекарасын кеңейту үшін жұмсақ дағдылар туралы хабардарлықты арттырудың маңыздылығына назар аударады.

Түйін сөздер: икемді және қатал дағдылар, көшбасшылық, инноваторлар, іске қосу, өзгерістер, жобалар, қабілеттер, команда.

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Управление персоналом в организациях через лидерские навыки

Современные проблемы, стоящие перед современной организацией, заставляют ее руководство заниматься изменениями, проектами, инновациями или стартапами. Для поддержания конкурентных преимуществ важно развивать навыки, необходимые для решения возникающих проблем. Целью данного документа является обсуждение этих вопросов. Авторы попытались выявить лидерские навыки, которые, в первую очередь, необходимы для эффективного управления организациями. В этом исследовании используется значение мягких навыков. Это исследование также определяет, какие навыки следует воспринимать как мягкие.

Цель научных исследований – изучить степень осведомленности о концепции мягких навыков среди казахстанских сотрудников. Теория лидерства обобщает практический опыт сотен и тысяч людей. Без теоретической основы трудно развивать лидерские качества, которые сегодня пользуются спросом. Современные организации для повышения эффективности должны сосредоточиться на развитии лидерских навыков, в частности на умственных навыках, которые отражают культуру и стратегию организации. Обучение персонала, повышение его осведомленности и реализация программы повышения эффективности руководства являются дальнейшими направлениями исследований.

Исходя из выбранного подхода исследования, данные опроса могут восприниматься как надежные, но поисковые. Таким образом, для подтверждения результатов необходимы репрезентативные экспериментальные данные.

Были проведены поперечные исследования с участием $n = 155$ человек, работающих в различных организациях. Исследование состояло из двух этапов. Первый этап исследования проводился на основе вторичной информации качественных исследований. Вторичные данные, представленные в обзоре литературы, помогли выдвинуть две гипотезы. Всесторонний анализ вторичных данных помог интерпретировать первичные данные с большим пониманием.

Первоначальный прогноз заключался в том, что низкая информированность ведет к плохой работе любой деятельности, в которой люди взаимодействуют. Выводы, сделанные в ходе онлайн-опроса, показали, что большинство респондентов из Казахстана (83%) не информированы о мягких навыках и, как следствие, уделяют меньше внимания повышению их качества.

Полученные результаты представляют собой важный шаг к пониманию того, как казахстанские сотрудники могут повысить личную производительность за счет повышения осведомленности о гибких навыках.

В рамках обсуждения основное внимание уделяется важности повышения осведомленности о мягких навыках среди казахстанских предпринимателей, бизнесменов и сотрудников для расширения границ возможностей карьерного роста.

Ключевые слова: гибкие и жесткие навыки, лидерство, инноваторы, стартап, изменения, проект, способности, команда.

Introduction

Contemporary challenges facing modern organization force its management to deal with changes, projects, innovations or start-ups. To maintain competitive advantages, it is important to develop skills necessary to solve emerging problems. The paper aims to discuss these issues. The authors have attempted to reveal leadership skills that are primarily needed to manage organizations effectively. This study applies the significance of soft skills. This study also identifies what skills should be perceived as soft ones. In contemporary organizations, it is essential that managers possess particular skills to lead. Ideally, a manager should have the necessary skills at a sufficient level to lead employees of an organization. Good leadership development should concentrate on the skills required to deal with change, implement project or launch start-ups. Any leadership development program must deal with how to enhance commitment of employees to the organization and help to cultivate the entrepreneurial or participative cultures depending on the request.

The purpose of scientific research is to study the degree of awareness concerning the soft skills concept among Kazakhstani employees. The theory of leadership generalizes the practical experience of hundreds and thousands of people. Without a theoretical foundation, it is difficult to develop leadership skills that are in demand today. Contemporary organizations to improve their effectiveness should focus on developing leadership skills, in particular soft skills, which are a reflection of the organization's culture and strategy. Training of personnel, raising its awareness and implementing a program of leadership effectiveness are further directions of the research.

The test units of the research paper are Kazakhstani employed people working for various

organizations. The subject of the research paper is soft skills of employees.

Due to the selected survey approach the data are correlational and can be perceived as reliable but exploratory one. Thus, representative experimental data is needed to confirm the findings.

Materials and Methods

For the data collection, an online survey was employed, which was distributed among Kazakhstani employees via Survey Monkey program. The participants were recruited out of the pool of the respondents and satisfied certain criteria, such as being employed with a minimum of three years work. The research had the preliminary feature and should be perceived as exploratory one. Online survey was based on the convenience sample of nonprobability sampling technique (Malhotra, 2013, Gupta, 2004). The survey was conducted very fast because sampling units gave their responses at once. In spite of these advantages, the convenience sample has serious limitations. Primarily the resulting sample was not representative of the target population. At the same time, the sampling process suffered from selection bias. Because of these limitations, it would be difficult to generalize the results of the research to the population. To overcome these disadvantages the descriptive or causal research are needed additionally. Questionnaires were designed with the target respondents in mind, taking into account their educational level and experience. The Russian language used. Pretesting of questions took place before the survey. In the questionnaire filter, structured, multiple-choice, dichotomous questions and Likert scale was used. A cross-sectional survey design with an n=155 employed people working for various organizations was selected. The research consisted of two stages. The first stage of the research was conducted on the base of exploratory research design. Secondary data presented in the

literature review helped to propose two hypotheses. During conducting research two hypotheses were proposed. They are:

H1: All kinds of managerial power are realized due to the level and extension of soft skills.

H2: Soft skills emerge and evolve if they are in demand.

The comprehensive analysis of secondary data helped to interpret primary data with more insight. The initial prediction was that that low awareness leads to poor performance of any activity where people interact. Findings taken from online survey showed that the most Kazakhstani respondents (83%) are not informed about soft skills and as a result pay less attention to enhance them.

Literature review

The realization of leadership is possible due to two components: a suitable environment and the availability of personal qualities (skills) of the leader. The suitable environment for the realization of leadership includes organizational culture and structure, availability of resources, and delegation of authority. However, without the leader's distinctive interpersonal skills, the presence of external environment is not enough (Cotrell, 2005, 2008).

According to Blumberg M. (2013) the hardest job in management is the «first time CEO» and «at least 75% of first time CEO's fail.» In fact, human resources management is a complex and responsible work. Blumberg M. (2013, p. xxiii) suggests: «Ask for help from your board and get coaching and mentoring... And don't let the fear of failure get in the way». In this regard, Heath Ch. & Heath D. (2010) have gave a reasonable answer: «In times of change, we need to remind ourselves and others... basic truths: Our brains and our abilities are like muscles. They can be strengthened with practice...» What should we do that employees could do everything correctly and cope with the most difficult problems? What conditions are necessary for this? Christensen C.M. (1997, p. 171) in his famous book, «The innovator's dilemma» writes «If a manager determined that an employee was incapable of succeeding at a task, he or she would either find someone else to do the job or carefully train the employee to be able to succeed. Training often works, because individuals can become skilled at multiple tasks». So, one of the initial steps to dealing with employees well is training them. However, there are cases when training is useless. Especially if the organization implements changes and project activities. In this connection, it is necessary to understand the concept

of an organization's capabilities. An organization's capabilities depends largely on the people who work in it. According to Christensen (2012), capabilities are factors that determine what a company can and cannot do and three things can represent the organization's capabilities: resources, processes and priorities. «Together, these capabilities are crucial in order to assess what a company can and, perhaps more important, cannot accomplish» (Christensen, 2012, p. 124). If managers understand that an organization's capabilities are not suited for a new task, in these cases they have three options «through which to create new capabilities» (Christensen, 1997, p. 172). Here Christensen offers more than radical methods. According to him managers could do:

- Acquire a different organization whose processes and values are a close match with the new task

- Try to change the processes and values of the current organization

- Separate out an independent organization and develop within it the new processes and values that are required to solve the new problem (Christensen, 1997, p. 172).

According to Gardiner (2005), five fundamental systems in every organization constitute the underpinnings to develop effective teams. They are culture, structure, internal economy, methods and tools, metrics and rewards.

In principle, Gardner and Christensen do not contradict each other. Many authors insist that efficiency of leadership primarily depends on culture and organizational culture (Williams, 2012; Dubrin, 2006; Clements & Gido, 2011, Muhtarova et al 2014, Kubaev & Baysholanova 2013, Kappels 2008, Mazur et al 2004).

Therefore, if executives are interested in changing the situation in organization they have to be aware of principles of leadership, project and change management instruments. For example in functional organizations and organizations of weak matrixes, the project manager does not have enough power to make team members do something. As a result, a project manager tries to influence team members without any direct authority. Therefore, a project manager has to use leadership and interpersonal skills like persuasion, negotiation, and communication. Project managers often have little formal authority. They «therefore get their authority through respect for their experience, good track records, persuasiveness and downright dogged determination – in short, by influence» (Field & Keller, 2011). Project managers have the responsibility to satisfy

the needs: task needs, team needs, and individual needs. As project management is a critical strategic discipline, the project manager becomes the link between the strategy and the team (PMBOK© Guide, 2008). Projects are tools to grow and survive for organizations. Projects help ‘to create value in the form of improved business processes» (PMBOK© Guide, 2008, p.17). They are necessary in producing new products and services. Project management makes it easier for companies to respond to changes in the environment and to be more competitive. As a result, the project manager’s role becomes increasingly strategic. Yet, understanding and applying the knowledge, tools, and techniques on project management is not enough to do right things. The Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge of the Project Management Institute insists that in addition to any area-specific skills and general management proficiencies required for the project, effective project management requires that the project manager possess the following competencies (PMBOK© Guide, 2008).

Knowledge refers to «hard skills» of project management. Performance refers to «what the project manager is able to do while applying his or her project management knowledge» (PMBOK© Guide, 2008). Personal skills refers to «soft skills» or «...how the project manager behaves when performing the project or related activity. Personal effectiveness encompasses attitudes, core personality characteristics, and leadership, which provides the ability to guide the project team while achieving project objectives and balancing the project constraints» (PMBOK© Guide, 2008).

Project managers implement work through the stakeholders of a project. Managing project effectively require project managers to show «a balance of ethical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills that help them analyze situations and interact appropriately» (PMBOK© Guide, 2008). Further, the important soft skills of project managers are presented. They are team building, motivation, communication, influencing, decision-making, and political awareness. The soft skills are particularly important to project managers. Leading means influencing people to achieve any organizational objectives. Leading involves energizing, directing, persuading others, and creating a vision.

Results and discussion

According to Dubrin (2006), leadership includes such important interpersonal processes as motivating, communicating, coaching, and showing

group members how they can reach their goals. Leadership is a key component of managerial work because management accomplish through people. The leadership aspect of management focuses on inspiring people and bringing about change, whereas the other three functions (organizing, controlling, and planning) focus more on maintaining a stable system (Dubrin, 2006). In essence, the mentioned interpersonal processes are example of realization of soft skills. At the same time Dubrin talks about the environment (stable system) where soft skills should be realized,

In line with various other scholars (e.g. Sanghera, 2011 and Clements J.P., Gido J., (2011) state that managing projects effectively takes a multitude of skills. They suggest all skills of a project manager to divide into two parts: managerial skills and interpersonal ones. Managerial skills involve the next: accounting and financial management, attention to details, information technology, negotiation and conflict management, problem solving, sales and marketing. Interpersonal skills include communication, influencing, leadership, networking, and perceptive navigation. In this case, managerial skills relate with hard skills, in turn interpersonal ones are associated with soft skills.

Skills to influence the behavior of others relates to power. Power of managers comes from authority. Power is delegated to the manager from the upper level of the organization. It takes place when the organization expects the realization of its strategies and projects. If the manager does not have formal authority, there are other forms of power that he or she can use (Field & Keller, 2011):

- *legitimate power, based on* charismatic traits of a project manager;
- *expertise power, based on knowledge;*
- *affiliative power that arises* from being associated with powerful persons in the organization;
- political awareness gaining from the support of colleagues and superiors.

Managers or project managers have to use those kinds of power that are most suited both to their subordinates and colleagues and to the situation; having that power and applying it appropriately allows managers to influence where they cannot command (Field & Keller 2011). It can be assumed that all these types of power are realized through soft skills.

Not only managers or project managers are interested in high performance. Marketers as Kotler Ph. and Armstrong G. (2016, p. 305) value using a **team-based new product development** approach. Under this approach, «company departments work

closely together in cross-functional teams.» As a result overlapping the steps in the product development process takes place. Project managers usually use overlapping in project management aspects. Instead of considering the product by departments in turn, the company can create a team of people from various departments that deal with the project (event, change, and product) from start to finish. There are many examples when such cross-functional teams are very effective. Why they are so effective? Is leadership the main reason? Johnson S. (2010) does not think so and in his book 'Where good ideas come from. The natural history of innovations' tries to give another argument, basing on the following example: «When the first market towns emerged in Italy, they didn't magically create some higher-level group consciousness. They simply widened the pool of minds that could come up with and share good ideas. This is not the wisdom of the crowd, but the wisdom of *someone* in the crowd. It's not that the network itself is smart; it's that the individuals get smarter because they're connected to the network.»

Harvard Business School Professors Kim Clark and Steven Wheelwright say about *heavyweight and lightweight teams*. The *heavyweight* team refers to a group of people «who are pulled out of their functional organizations and placed in a team structure that allows them to interact over different issues at a different pace and with different organizational groups than they habitually could across the boundaries of functional organizations. Heavyweight teams are tools to create new processes, or new ways of working together. In contrast, *lightweight* or functional teams are tools to exploit existing processes. (2000 cited by Christensen C.M., Raynor M.E., 2003).

Yet some authors find out other reasons why companies fail when face changes. Kotter J.P. (2012) argues that the biggest mistake people make when trying to change organizations is not having established a sufficiently high sense of urgency in employees. This error according to Kotter (2012, p.4) can become «fatal, because transformations always fail to achieve their goals, when complacency levels are high.»

Kawasaki (2015) gives interesting idea concerning how to solve the problem of a shortage of great employees. He considers that recruiting decisions should not be based on «irrelevant considerations» like race, creed, color, sexual orientation, religion, formal education and work experience. Instead, Kawasaki (2015, p. 174) makes a focus on the next three factors as:

1. Ability of the candidate to perform what the leader needs.

2. The candidate's confidence in what he does.

3. The candidate's trustworthy and commitment.

In fact, Kawasaki puts soft skills in the first place.

Moreover Kawasaki G. (2015, p. 175) gives an advice to follow to two theories:

- «1. Find the candidate who lacks major weaknesses (even though he lacks major strengths).

2. Find the candidate who has major strengths (even though he has major weaknesses).»

Kawasaki (2015) divides all skills into big organization skills and start-up skills.

Table 1 – Big organization skill and startup skill (Kawasaki, 2015, p. 176)

Big organization skill	Startup skill
Sucking up to the boss	Being the boss
Generating paper profits	Generating cash flow
Beating charges of monopoly	Establishing a beachhead
Evolving products	Creating products
Market research	Shipping
Squeezing the distribution channel	Establishing a distribution channel

Kawasaki (2015, p. 177) continues: «startups take four to five years of long hours at low pay with incredible highs and depressing lows with the constant fear of running out of money. And this is if things go well.» Like other authors (Clark K. and Wheelwright S., 2000, as cited in Christensen C.M., Raynor M.E., 2003) Kawasaki (2015, p. 176) dedicates meaningfulness of soft skills presented as startup skills.

The use of leadership skills is not enough to ensure that human resources can fulfill any assigned task. Managers should take into account other factors, such as organization structure, culture, strategy, interest and dedication, and much more. Knapp et al. (2016, p. 29-37) have suggested recruiting a team members according to roles and consider that a mix is good like in the movie «Ocean's Eleven». According to the mentioned authors the effective team includes the decider, finance expert, marketing expert, customer expert, tech/logistics expert, and design expert. Only in such kind of team the «collaborative atmosphere» (Knapp et al. 2016, p. 35) takes place.

Some authors believe that the effectiveness of performance depends not only on employees, but

also on executives. Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen (2011, p. 5, 27) believe that «entrepreneurs are somehow different from other executives.» The authors in their research are focused on *innovators*, in particular, *innovative* entrepreneurs. According to Kurman (2013, p.17), «If you want innovation to take place, set it free, and if it comes back to you – well – it’s not precisely yours, but at least you’ve succeeded in introducing genuine value to the rest of the world...» Indeed, the innovators can courage to innovate and innovators have to possess behavioral skills as questioning, observing, networking, and

experimenting which lead to associational thinking and as a result to creating the innovative business idea. Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen (2011) are presenting the innovator’s DNA model for generating innovative ideas. The model is shown in the figure 2. Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen (2011, p. 27) distinguish innovators as people who actively engage in discovery skills. As Lafley (2008) declared, «innovation is the central job of every leader – business unit managers, functional leaders, and the CEO» (2008, as cited in Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen, 2011).

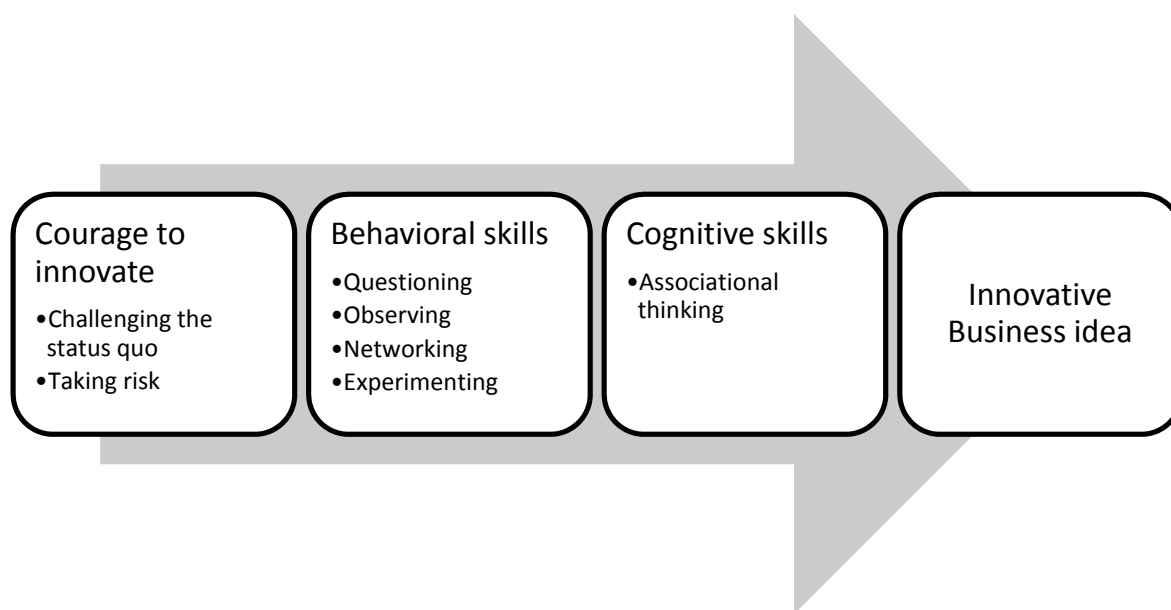


Figure 1 – The innovator’s DNA model for generating innovative ideas (Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen, 2011, p. 27)

In accordance with Bessant and Tidd (2015, p.144), «creativity is also about motivation and communication.» Nevertheless, successful entrepreneurs are not just able to come up with creative idea; they can shape and adapt their ideas. «They have a strong sense of vision and can communicate and engage others in sharing that insight» (Bessant and Tidd, 2015, p.145).

Kerzner and Saladis (2013, p. 41) as professional project managers suggest focusing on the skills that help in «Achieving the objectives of a project and ensuring customer satisfaction». All these require «a project team that is knowledgeable, has the necessary skill set, is fully committed to the project, and is managed by a project manager who possesses effective organization, communication, and leadership skills».

In fact, «some individuals are naturally talented in doing the right thing at the right time and in the right way to help their teams succeed»; in other respects other individuals «require training to develop their skills in taking action» (Hachman, 2002, p. 224). He suggests the different from other authors of skills but they are so close to soft skills:

- Envisioning Skill
- **Inventive Skill**
- Negotiation Skill
- Decision-Making Skill
- Teaching Skill
- Interpersonal Skill
- Implementation Skill.

At the same time, Hachman (2002) states that training should involve observation of «positive models» combined with practice and feedback.

Stone and Heen (2015, p. 45) pay special attention to feedback because it «helps increase knowledge, skill, capability, growth».

Results of the study showed that only 17 % or 26 (10 men and 16 female) respondents are informed about soft skills. At the same time, 58% of respondents strongly agree and 10 % of respondents agree that interpersonal (soft) skills are very important for their career opportunities. After short explanation concerning soft skills, 95% of respondents answered that soft skills are demanded at their workplace and they have to be evolved throughout life. In addition, majority of the respondents (73 %) accepted that the power's exercising depends on the personal characteristics of the leader or manager.

One of the reasons why this research project was initiated is the attempt to systematize issues related to the importance of leadership qualities, in particular soft skills. The subject of the research is very popular among both academicians and business community. All authors, regardless of the professional sphere, note that the modern world is rapidly changing. To maintain competitiveness, organizations must meet the challenges of the external environment. However, conventional management is not enough. Leadership and power through flexible skills are able to deal with new challenges. Also, most authors note that there two factors that can make possible to face changes effectively. First, it is fundamental systems; that is, organization must prepare the ground for all processes that would take place in the organization. Second, it is the level of comprehensive skills of the organization's leaders. In an ever-changing world, the development and cultivation of the company employees' important skills is an integral part of the organization's strategy. However, it is necessary to distinguish between hard and soft skills. Not neglecting to develop hard skills, but pay particular attention to soft skills,

that are dependent on the goals of the organization or project.

The practical consequence of the research paper lies in possibility to solve the problem that is connected with low awareness concerning soft skills among Kazakhstani employees that leads to a decrease in their overall performance and potential loss of opportunities.

Although the paper is based on the primary studies in the survey form, there are nevertheless some limitations on reliability because the survey was conducted online and therefore the sample is non-probability, which in itself requires further research projects.

Conclusion

Contemporary challenges facing modern organization force its management to deal with changes, projects, innovations or start-ups. To maintain competitive advantages, it is important to develop skills necessary to solve emerging problems. A cross-sectional survey design with an n=155 employed people working for various organizations was selected. It is important to increase awareness on the soft skills among Kazakhstani entrepreneurs, businesspersons and employees to expand boundaries of career opportunities. The presented results present an important step toward understanding how Kazakhstani employees could increase the personal performance via increasing awareness of soft skills. During the research project two hypotheses were proposed. According to the results of the research the idea, concerning that, all kinds of managerial power are realized due to the level and extension of soft skills is confirmed. The second hypothesis as «Soft skills emerge and evolve if they are in demand» has been proven too but because of nonprobability sample the research project should be continued.

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