

# PERSONAL MANAGEMENT (PM)

## Plan of the first part

- Introduction to the first part
- Foundations of personal management
- Process of self-knowledge
- Wider associations of personal management
- Shift to principal leadership and its effect on personal management

## *Objectives of the first part*

After reading this part the reader should be able to:

- *Perceive personal management as a tool for successful private as well as professional life.*
- *Be aware of the radical change in what is required of the potential as well as productive knowledge-workers in the knowledge society.*
- *See the content of personal management in wider context.*
- *Realize that the basis of effective personal management is self-knowledge and know how to carry out this process generally.*
- *Understand the effect of natural laws and mental principles, and their impact on personal management; contemplate his/her attitude to these laws and principles.*
- *Comprehend the effect of the shift of management paradigms towards principal leadership on personal management.*
- *Analyse a personal paradigm and its shift.*
- *Understand the seven habits of efficient people and based on his/her free will start to acquire them.*

## 2.1. Introduction to the first part

In professional management texts there are only sketchy notes about personal management (hereafter PM) and its problems. The aim of this publication is to present the area of PM as a whole and to strengthen people's awareness that without a good level of PM it is impossible to build an effective system of management either in interest groups or organizations (hereafter OJ). Analogically, the person's level of PM can be compared to the foundations of a building, and only solid foundations can guarantee a building of high quality.

Implicitly, the question of significance and position of PM within general management arises. So far the efforts of science and management practice were and still are aimed at leading people using "eligible" managers. However, the shift of management paradigm commands to direct its effort prior to PM, i.e. significantly improve the quality of PM and thus create the fundamental precondition for truly effective leadership of other people. Therefore it is an entirely new approach to management based on the premise that: "It is impossible to effectively lead the objects of management without the subjects of management being able to effectively lead themselves!" This premise may sound quite natural to the reader. In reality, this premise has long been inadequately reflected by science and management practice, which has been exclusively absorbed in examining the effectiveness of the subjects of management influencing the objects of management.

Regarding the objective of this publication to promote the idea of perceiving management as an effective tool not only for OJs, but also for interest groups and, particularly, for everybody's private and professional lives, later we will demonstrate examples of the consequences of underestimating PM in OJs, interest groups and for individuals.

There are many OJs, the top management of which consists of highly professional, intellectually and experientially eligible leaders and managers. Even though these OJs also have very eligible workers, whose work is done in analogous fields and who are offered many opportunities both by the general and departmental environments, these OJs struggle for existence, are not competitive and thus unsuccessful. The top management blames the unfortunate state on unfavourable outside circumstances and selection of incorrect management methods and techniques. The real reason for such failure is usually an insufficient level of PM of the OJs management, the symptoms of which are for instance those that the General Manager is always "right", communication and interaction within the top management takes place without deeper understanding for the personal potential of its members, the top management is under constant time pressure, etc.

The beginning of endeavour of many interest groups is often marked by excessive enthusiasm to promote, realize or change something. Nevertheless, why is it that this enthusiasm shortly vanishes and the original objective fails to be realized? Again the cause for the failure is usually blamed on "the others", or rather on unfavourable circumstances. If the situation received objective consideration, which is not the practice, it would be disclosed that the causes for failure usually lie within the group of colleagues, for the effort to achieve the objectives often gets diverted to the struggle for position within the group through gossip and plots.

Most people desire success in work, happiness, love and health. Nevertheless, there are quite a lot of people, successful in work, whose personal lives remind us of "hunting". They can only dream of happiness, their marriages are falling apart, and the symptoms of serious illnesses are more and more insistent. These people are no fools, on the contrary, they are usually people with above-average intelligence; nonetheless, their level of PM is below average. That is why they look for the roots of their private-life failures in lack of time, adversity of fate, etc.

The above stated examples have something in common - they manifest the deeply rooted premise that what is crucial for success in life is to attain the highest degree of education possible and above-standard diligence. It is not our desire at all to question the importance of education and diligence for the quality of life; nevertheless, there are other important factors that affect the quality of human life - the maturity and the art to live. Unfortunately, the "social maturity" of people in this society is formed rather superficially and inadequately, considering its significance. It is the creating of public awareness of PM's key role in human life and thus purposive increasing of PM level which can be seen as the challenge regarding the improvement of the quality of individual as well as social life.

Further interpretation of PM is not extensive. However, it focuses not only on the fundamental phase of PM - the process of self-knowledge - but also on the explanation of the content of PM in the wide context of timeless natural law's effects and in the light of the shift of management paradigms to principal leadership.

Despite the fact that the interpretation of PM is intended for all people to use, it is vital to emphasize that we would like to appeal primarily to potential as well as efficient knowledge-

workers (hereafter KLW). It will be particularly them exclusively who will have to handle "self-management" on a much more qualitatively advanced level than it has been so far. This statement, apart from other things, rests on P.F. Drucker's opinion that it is a priority for science and management practice of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to significantly improve the efficiency of KLWs.

## 2.2. Foundations of the traditional concept of PM

In the past - and sometimes in the present, too - huge success was achieved by people who were lucky enough to find use for their talents. These people either had apt "mentors", or rather were capable of regulating their activities effectively, or were simply lucky.

In the environment of the knowledge society all potential as well as efficient KLWs in all professional fields will have no choice but to learn the foundations of effective PM. Generally, the content of PM can be summarized into the following successive steps:

- Carry out a personal "audit" as the basis for your personal orientation;
- Identify the working positions the worker's personality matches, and therefore is presupposed to achieve the biggest individual and social benefits from;
- Obtain knowledge of how to develop yourself in the future;
- Obtain knowledge of how and when to change your professional orientation;

Among other things, KLWs must take into account that they will "outlive" their employers' OJs or at least the performance function or the organization form of these OJs will change considerably. Furthermore, the KLWs will have to adapt to changes of their future working functions, the altered nature of their work, their newly required abilities and, what is more, they will have to manage the changes in interrelationship matters because their colleagues will change, too.

- Prepare yourselves constantly to handle the requirement to remain biologically young and mentally active for the whole of your working career which is steadily being prolonged.

Considering the unfavourable demographic development in most of the developed countries, including the Czech Republic, it is expected that e.g. the retiring age will be growing continually, possibly up to 70 years of age. For instance, P.F. Drucker envisages a future tolerable retiring age to be 78!

### 2.2.1. The self-knowledge process

From the paragraphs above it is obvious that especially the younger KLWs will have to face requirements entirely different from those their older colleagues encountered. To meet these requirements it will be demanded of them to form their PM, based on the results of the objectively carried "personal audit". Answers should be found to the following questions within the self-knowledge process:

- Who am I?
- What are my assets?

- How do I work?
- How do I learn?
- Where do I belong?
- What is my contribution?
- Am I able to assume relational responsibility?

Individual "self-knowledge" questions are discussed in the following text.

#### 2.2.1.1. *Who am I?*

The answer to this question seems easy. The opposite is true. Everybody has a certain image of themselves based on our feelings and on the other people's reactions to our behaviour and actions. For various reasons it is very difficult to learn who we really are.

For example, to a common social convention people around us usually react rather insincerely, sometimes effusively and often indifferently.

And because we often do not know it, or rather we have a false image of ourselves, the result, among others, is that:

- The potential KLW's study subject field is unsuitable for them, thus they are stressed and bored by it which eventually leads to individually and socially ineffective professional careers;

Presently we can hear such opinions, unfortunately some Czech university representatives share them, that after a student graduates from university, they will have to attend a re-qualification course to be able to assert themselves.

- Many a KLW selects their professional career contrary to their personal qualities and then work in functions which do not "fit" them. This may lead to dissatisfaction and a loss of feeling of self-realization, and eventually to a fall in productivity.

To learn "who I am" it is crucial to accept the long omitted fact that much of "who I am" is determined genetically as well as by up-bringing, especially in an early childhood. If you accept this premise it is useful to identify your own "personal profile", primarily through scientifically proved psychological methods.

One of the very effective and practically tested relevant methods is the system of profile analyses, a psychodiagnostic tool specially designed for personnel work. It combines elements of work analysis with the assistance of work profile analysis and psychodiagnostic examination of practical intelligence, especially of the social competence factor with the assistance of a personal profile analysis of each individual. It is based on two questionnaires. A multidimensional questionnaire "AOP" which examines four most important characteristics of the working style of the assessed KLW, i.e. his/her dominance, influence on people, stability needs, willingness to adapt, and the questionnaire "APP", used to create a "professiogram". The theory which serves as a basis for the system of profile

analyses has been verified and proves that "people react to their environs in such ways as to avoid troubles and to increase their pleasures". However, in their reactions they are limited by their innate qualities. Even though it has not been proved conclusively yet, experiments and personnel practice demonstrate that the level of compatibility between the "personal" provision of a KLW and the ideal "personal" potential for the particular profession has remarkable importance for the performance and job satisfaction of the particular individual. Not to be mistaken, the system of profile analysis can provide answers only to one part of the assumptions for successful performance of work function. It assesses neither intelligence, eligibility, experience nor personal or social background - which are also key criteria for assessing an individual's suitability for their job performance. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that if the characteristics of desirable conduct, required by the work function, are missing, it is improbable that the KLW in question will be capable of performing the work function in an anticipated way, even though other criteria have been fulfilled. The future KLW will not attain the required productivity and perhaps will be dissatisfied in his job and thus exposed to health risk.

#### *2.2.1.2. What are my assets?*

KLWs are usually certain about their assets, but usually they are wrong. Often they are also wrong about what they are not good at! It is logical that KLWs cannot build their productivity on their weaknesses. The general idea, therefore, is that if you focus your effort on reducing or eliminating the weaknesses, the qualities for professional success will appear. P.F. Drucker recommends a more effective procedure:

- Disclose the assets and weaknesses of a particular KLW with the assistance of the feedback analysis;

Feedback analysis consists of comparing the anticipated consequences resulting from important decisions with the real consequences of these decisions, being analyzed with time distance and due detachment. To objectify this comparison it is required of the KLW to note down what consequences he/she thinks this decision will bring, and one year after this decision has been made to compare the anticipated consequences with the reality. In P.F. Drucker's opinion, the results of this method should demonstrate in two or three years what the individual assets are, or which activities/inactivities deprive the KLW of the full exploitation of their potential, and also should stress those fields of activities in which the KLW has no potential at all.

- Consistently follow the results of this analysis, i.e.:
  - concentrate on one's assets and find a job where the individual qualities of each KLW will lead to their high productivity and positive results,
  - work exclusively on improving the individual assets of KLW's and devote the least possible effort to improving those fields of activities where their qualifications are insignificant or non-existent,
  - identify the areas of activities where the "intellectual arrogance" of a particular KLW leads to ignorance,

It is very sad to say that many KLVs with profound knowledge in one field disregard knowledge from other fields, or they assume that their intellect will compensate for it. The example of such an unfortunate arrogance could be the prevailing habit of top university professors and renowned physicians to "disdain", to quite a large extent, the need of high managerial eligibility for the required level of academic functions performance, such as rector, vice-rector, dean, vice-dean, etc., or high managerial functions performance in hospitals, such as director, deputy director, head physician, etc.

- surpass this arrogance and develop a system and interdisciplinary perception of reality.

The authors of this publication consider the arrogance against the managerial eligibility to be the key precondition for improving the level of university education in the Czech Republic, or for hospitals to begin to materialize their missions on a desirable level and without deficits in management.

#### ***2.2.1.3. How do I work?***

Hypothetically, it holds good that only few KLVs know how they fulfill their tasks. Moreover, not many of them realize that their colleagues use different ways of working, and, therefore, their productivity differs. In reality, very often KLVs work in such ways that are not relevant to their personal provisions, which is one of the fundamental causes of their insufficient productivity.

The way one works is very individual and depends on the personality of a particular worker. Thus, it can only be modified, not changed! KLVs produce good results when they make use of their assets, analogically, they can produce good results if the way they work matched their personality.

#### ***2.2.1.4. How do I learn?***

It is likely that KLVs know their best ways of learning, but research shows that, practically, this knowledge is barely made use of. That is a big mistake since using the knowledge of "how I learn best" is the key to improving productivity. It is highly expedient to be aware of the fact that different KLVs learn in different ways, or they use a combination of these ways:

- making notes,
- writing,
- speaking,
- hands-on experience.

In connection with the above stated information, it is a serious and widely held misconception that, for example, the educational process is usually performed with the notion that there is only one correct teaching method.

#### ***2.2.1.5. Where do I belong?***

P.F. Drucker states that most KLWs do not know where they belong until they are 25. Young people (especially would-be KLWs) at this age should already have their assets verified and should know how they work, how they learn and what their set of values is. On the basis of this knowledge, they should make a rational decision where they belong or not. In other words, they should know where to direct their professional career and what to avoid.

However, it would be very unwise to make such a decision immediately after graduation, without gaining profound practical experience.

It is useful to know "where I belong", especially for KLWs who are hard-working and capable, but "only" of average intelligence. These, according to the validity of standard division of number, have been and will be most numerous in the population. Thanks to the correct selection of job within the circle of "where I belong", they will be able to achieve above-average productivity and have the feeling of self-realization.

#### **2.2.1.6. What is my contribution?**

To answer this question means to go from knowledge over to activity. Nevertheless, the right question is not "What should my contribution be?" or "What do they say my contribution should be?", but **"What should my contribution, as a KLW, be?"**

Before starting to look for an answer to this important question, every KLW should comprehend that in this culture (Czech Republic) there is an embedded tradition of somebody assigning a task and of us fulfilling the task as well as possible. In the knowledge society it will be the KLW's responsibility to assign a task themselves. It is, therefore, strongly recommended to encourage the would-be KLWs during their studies to be independent in assigning tasks and setting goals. The OJs' managements should also support forming such a company culture where independence in assigning tasks and setting goals is common practice.

In order for the KLWs to correctly answer the question "what is my contribution?", they should make use of self-assessment to find out if the tasks and goals they have set:

- comply with their assets,
- correspond to their motivators.

The individual decision about the effectiveness of contribution orientation requires of the particular KLW to contemplate their reaction to three elements, expressed by the following questions:

- What does the situation require?
- How can I personally contribute to what must be done, employing my assets, the way I work and my set of values?
- What results do I have to produce to achieve change?

#### **2.2.1.7. Am I able to assume relational responsibility?**

Professional as well as leisure activities are usually done in cooperation with other people. The inevitable outcome for the KLW is to assume the so-called "relational responsibility". To assume the relational responsibility is to accept the fact that other KLWs are as individualistic

as I am. They do not usually listen to the advice of other people and their conduct is in harmony with "what they are like", because they have their own assets, they work or cooperate in accord with their own way of working and they have their own sets of values. It is interesting and sad at the same time that, even though most reasonable readers will agree with this opinion, nonetheless, this fact is very little reflected both in personal and professional lives.

**To assume the relational responsibility** means:

- **To understand the people** a K LW cooperates with and is in a way dependent on, and to learn to make use of your colleagues' assets, their working methods and sets of values;
- **To assume responsibility for communication** that is, to respect "whoever needs what from me?", "who am I dependent on regarding the task or goal to be achieved?", and "who of my colleagues is dependent on me, my efficiency, my fulfilment of my duties, etc.?";
- **To communicate** with your colleagues **in such a way that suits them**, i.e. it corresponds to their personal characteristics;
- **Not to underestimate the principle of relational responsibility towards your own person.** This principle guarantees the right to every K LW to ask of his/her colleagues and superiors to adapt their behaviour and treatment of his/her person to his/her assets, working methods and set of values.

Asserting authority gradually ceases to be the cornerstone of an OJ's success. The emphasis is slowly put on self-confidence of individual K LW's and their mutual trust. This means that mutual understanding and relational responsibility are demanded of K LW's!