

**Berezin I. G.**

Psychological Features of Professional Identification of Employees of the Committee of Inquiry

As a steady trend towards a certain interpretation of “patterns” of professional activity and readiness to work according to arising sense-value attitudes, professional identification influences the level of professional activity and the extent of professional self-realization of employees of the Committee of Inquiry. The article describes results of the empirical study in which 1286 investigators took part. The author draws a conclusion that considering features of employees’ professional identification should be a component of effective leadership in conditions of work of the Committee of Inquiry.

Keywords: *sense-value sphere of personality, sense-of-life strategies, professional self-realization, identity, identification.*

The urgency of the subject of this article is caused by the increasing need of the state and society for increasing the efficiency of activity of the employees of the Committee of Inquiry of Russia (further – the Committee of Inquiry). Being a new structure in the system of state institutes of our country which are responsible for ensuring various aspects of functioning of the constitutional state, the Committee of Inquiry issues challenges for (before) psychological science which are formulated in the Federal Law “On the Committee of Inquiry of the Russian Federation”, 28.12.2010, no. 403-FZ. And first of all this is ensuring efficient and quality investigation of crimes. Legislatively, in its turn, certain priorities in the activity of the Committee of Inquiry cause the necessity of improvement of its employees’ activity, and in particular, its staffing, development and carrying out an adequate situation of personnel policy. As it is noted in the Concept of development of investigative management of the Committee of Inquiry of Russia the process of organizing the work of the Committee of Inquiry has to be accompanied by the adequate solution of personnel problems.

A special section of personnel problems is connected with search of psychological mechanisms of the head’s activation of employees’ personal and professional resource. The use of such mechanisms in real practice of managers in the work of the Committee of Inquiry will make it possible to increase the potential of conscious activity of employees in professional self-realization, will help to overcome the internal



conflicts connected with living and acceptance of self in a profession, to reveal and introspect the contradictions arising in the process of professionalizing in modern social-economic conditions between power structures and various social national groups.

Professional identification as the process of development of personal reflection of professional identity of self in correlation with a "reference pattern" of an employee of the relevant organization (professional self) for the purpose of achievement of positive professional self-identification can be considered as one of such mechanisms.

The problem of assessment employees' professional identification and the head's actualization of his/her professional resource on this basis is considered in various areas of psychological science. In the acmeological plan (A. A. Derkach, A. A. Bodalev, V. G. Zazykin, A. K. Markova), in the context of problems of human management (V. N. Markin, 2009) a number of questions connected with actualization of employees' professional resource are investigated. Professional identification is considered as one of such resources; it is treated as forming the employee's identity by intensive or long-term transformation of his/her identity at various stages of professional self-realization connected with influence of various professional and psychological factors. The quality change of the person's identity, systematization of the information on professional activity, creation of the mechanism of formation and rational use of steady information on stages and levels of the achieved identity, formation of identification structures and functional communications helping the person to comprehend the sense of identification and to improve capabilities of identification in the direction of the increase of efficiency of own professional activity are the result of the process of identification (V. R. Orestova, 2010).

Modern psychology considers the whole range of problems of professional and organizational identification. It is analyzed as an important component defining the specificity of the individual – the organization, the individual – the group interaction (O. N. Burmistrova, 2010). G. Teshfel's works concerning the theory of social identity and J. Turner's works concerning the self-categorization theory became a basis for researches in this area in our country.

In labour psychology and ergonomics professional identification is defined as an internal psychological resource of the personnel which can be initiated in the process of the correct organization of managerial activity (I. P. Volkov, A. A. Grachev, A. L. Zhuravlev, Yu. M. Zabrodin). This subject resource can be considered as the integrated mental construct influencing professional activity in accordance with internal criteria of efficiency and expediency (S. A. Belousova, 2011).

However, despite active researches of professional identification in psychology of our country, one can observe an obvious deficiency of works directed on reveal-



ing its specificity among those who work in power structures and, in particular, for among employees' of the Committee of Inquiry. Generally these works are devoted to the specificity of the activity of civil service employees, representatives of business, employees of industrial enterprises and trade establishments, teachers; unfortunately, there are no such works concerning employees of the Committee of Inquiry.

Professional identity of the employee of the Committee of Inquiry presupposes achievement of a certain level of correspondence with a "reference pattern" which is set by regulating documents. The employee's of the Committee of Inquiry relation to a "reference pattern" may be revealed through research of features of his/her sense attitudes indicators of the degree of attractiveness of the profession to an employee and the degree of his/her involvement into corporate community. It takes place through continuous correlation, strengthening of social-psychological qualities which are really realized by the person, being subjectively shown in self-appraisal and are estimated as expressed self-relations. Thus in the optimum variant all the main identification processes should be outstripping in comparison with a "norm". The effect of outstripping becomes a basic kernel of the offered understanding of the process of professional identification in the described research.

1286 persons, employees of the investigative departments of the Committee of Inquiry of the Russian Federation which are deployed on the territory of the Southern and North Caucasian federal districts were respondents in our research.

For revealing features of professional identification we have made two questionnaires: the first questionnaire was focused on revealing "reference characteristics" which should be inherent in the employee of the Committee of Inquiry and which direct his/her behavior toward "laws" of a corporate community and make the "base" of corporate culture; the second questionnaire was focused on revealing different types of identification which are inherent in employees of the Committee of Inquiry, and also stages of the employee's involvement in professional community, existence of barriers of "involvement" into professional community. Questioning was carried out for revealing the specificity of value attitudes of the research participants (positive or negative) in relation to values positioned as priority by regulating documents for employees of the Committee of Inquiry.

We have distinguished and characterized reference characteristics (or reference professional competences and universal actions, as they also treat them in recent years). There are reference characteristics in many specialties, however in relation to employees of the Committee of Inquiry there is its specificity connected with features of professional activity.



Table 1

Reference characteristics of employees of the Committee of Inquiry

No.	The employee's reference characteristic	The list of positive features indicating the existence of this reference characteristic
1	Legal regulation (normativeness) of professional behavior, decisions.	A high level of socialization of personality; a high level of feeling for law and order, social responsibility: honesty, civic courage, conscientiousness, adherence to principles, irreconcilability in a struggle with violations of law and order; obligatoriness, scrupulousness, sense of duty, discipline; domination of socially significant motives in the sphere of professional activity.
2	Responsible, obligatory character of professional powers.	The developed intelligence, flexible, creative thinking, ability to a deep, comprehensive analysis, to prediction; ability to distinguish the main thing; persistence, adherence to principles in statement of decisions; courage to take and bear personal responsibility for own actions and decisions; emotional balance; adequate self-appraisal; respect for people.
3	Extreme character of professional activity, ability to work in incidental conditions	Neuropsychic (emotional) tolerance of personality: tolerance towards psychophysical overloads which influence for a long time, high capacity for work; psychological resistance to a stress, a high level of self-control over emotions, mood, the developed adaptive properties of the nervous system (force, activity, dynamism, lability, plasticity of nervous processes).
4	Non-standard, creative character of professional activity.	Cognitive activity, efficiency of thinking: developed intelligence, broad outlook, erudition; flexible, creative thinking, intellectual performance capability, quick-wittedness: analytical mentality, predictive abilities, ability to distinguish the main thing; activity, mobility of mental cognitive processes (perception, thinking, attention), capacious memory; developed imagination, intuition, ability to abstraction, reflection.
5	Procedural independence, personal responsibility.	Social maturity of personality: psychological, emotional and volitional stability: developed intelligence, flexible creative thinking, predictive abilities; courage, resoluteness, ability to take the responsibility, self-confidence, persistence at a high level of self-criticism: adequate self-appraisal, motivation to achieving success.

At the first stage of the empirical part of the research the revealed by means of frequency and content analysis parameters (correspondence of the employee's representations about own professional image and its correspondence to reference characteristics) have made it possible to distinguish and characterize levels of professional and organizational identification of employees.



The overwhelming majority of employees of the Committee of Inquiry who have taken part in diagnostics understand that have to accept reference forms of behavior (that is written down in regulating documents, and that the management demands from them) as a sample. However it is difficult for them to define those competences and personal characteristics which are necessary for them to be alike an offered reference image (60 % of respondents). The overwhelming majority of employees who have taken part in the study are at a research stage, i.e. they try to understand how they should perceive themselves as a professional community member. They are potentially ready to become such as the society and management wants to see them. But they do not understand how exactly they can reach reference patterns.

The number of employees who obviously negatively estimate "reference characteristics" (i.e. are at a denial and resistance stage in the process of professional identification), is insignificant (less than 6 % and 9 %), however in our point of view, these employees need a special attention of those who carries out their professional support (leaders, psychologists, employees of the system of professional development) as they do not accept "reference" characteristics as those which can become their personal value and a model of development.

27 % of employees are at an involvement stage when reference patterns are regarded as a guide for own development and self-improvement. Thus they reflex own problems and see ways of real overcoming of shortcomings.

Only 5 % of employees have the highest level of professional identification; they consider reference patterns of behavior as something firm, what should be executed under any circumstances (diagram 1).

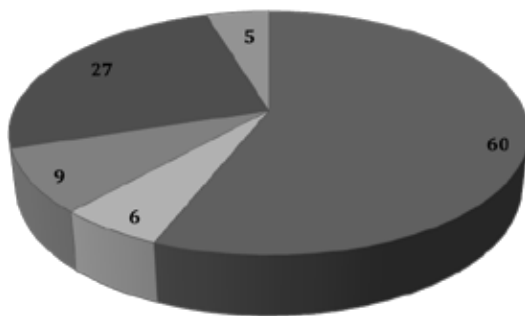


Diagram 1. The relation of employees' of the Committee of Inquiry to reference patterns of behavior

As we can see, 60 % of respondents understand that have to accept reference forms of behavior as a pattern. However it is difficult for them to define those competences and personal characteristics which are necessary for them to be alike an of-



ferred reference image. 6 and 9 % negatively estimate "reference characteristics". 27 % regard reference patterns as a guide for own development and self-improvement. 5 % consider reference patterns behavior as something firm, what should be executed under any circumstances.

Those employees who have had an average level of professional identification took part in further investigation phases.

The content analysis of answers to the questions of two questionnaires offered to the employees have made it possible to reveal strategies of professional identification of employees. We considered these strategies as a derivative from the sense-of-life strategies and strategies of professional behavior. We have united them in two groups: "positive" (positive assessment of "reference characteristics" and assessment of self as a person corresponding these characteristics) and "negative" (negative assessment of "reference characteristics" or assessment of self as a person who doesn't correspond these characteristics).

Strategies of professional identification should be considered as a certain complex:

- the employee's value relations to reference patterns;
- positive assessment of his/her own profession, his/her own professional future;
- positive assessment of his/her own organization (organization where the employee directly works);
- positive assessment of his/her own leaders;
- assessment of self from the point of view of correspondence to patterns;
- assessment of psychological climate of the organization;
- positive prospect of the development of professional community (society's assessment);
- specificity of "involvement barriers" (external and internal factors);
- development of a resource of personal interaction with colleagues.

Employees of the Committee of Inquiry who have positive professional identification of the average level realize it in the following strategies:

- neutral strategy with negativism elements, reflection of an involvement barrier ("I understand that standards are necessary, but I do not correspond to them and everything around me do not correspond to them, but I hope for positive transformations in the country and the Committee of Inquiry which will help employees to correspond more to what the society and population expect from them") – 3 %;
- neutral strategy with a positive tendency ("I understand that standards are necessary, but I do not correspond to them, however I work with those who correspond to these standards. I hope that I will become more perfect in a little while") – 6 %;
- ambivalent strategy, existence of an involvement barrier (reflection of internal factors, mismatch between professional and organizational identity) ("I know that there are people in our organization who do not correspond to standards,



and it prevents me from corresponding to them, but in other units of the Committee of Inquiry it is more nicely and I have a chance to correspond to desirable patterns in the future”) – 11 %;

–positive strategy (“in part I correspond to a standard, many my colleagues also correspond to it, however it is not absolutely clear to me what we can do for achievement of full compliance”) – 63 %;

–advancing positive strategy (“in part I correspond to a standard, many my colleagues correspond to it, and we are ready to display activity for further professional improvement. In our profession it is impossible without it”) – 17 %.

The carried-out comparison has made it possible to pass to the following stage of our research: the analysis of psychometric diagnostics among employees with various strategies of professional identification and description of symptom complexes of psychological characteristics for persons with different strategies of professional identification.

In groups with the “positive” strategy of identification we have revealed a significant correlation ($r = 0,844$ with $p \leq 0,01$) with an orientation to social activity for achieving success. The analysis of the data of the same group has revealed a statistically significant interrelation between personal differential (which it is peculiar to those who have positive professional identification) and such values as respect for others ($r = 0,749$ with $p \leq 0,05$), social status ($r = 0,658$ with $p \leq 0,05$), material welfare ($r = 0,727$ with $p \leq 0,01$) and possibility to do their own thing ($r = 0,888$ at $p \leq 0,001$). Positive correlation is also found between the profile of relation to business with the relation to another ($r = 0,770$ with $p \leq 0,01$) and social status ($r = 0,739$ with $p \leq 0,01$). In processing the results we have revealed a negative interrelation between the ambivalent strategy of professional identification and tolerance towards conflicts ($r = -0,843$ with $p \leq 0,01$). The higher the conflict level between internal and external labor motivation is, the lower the tolerance towards conflicts is and the higher the probability that in conditions of the increased emotional intensity the employee will control himself/herself badly is; this can provoke conflicts both with colleagues and other participants of professional interaction. The negative strategy was characteristic for these respondents. The obtained data testify to the effect that for employees with the “positive” strategy of professional identification it is important for other people and society to understand that their work brings real benefit and they should appreciate the great value of it as an important and socially significant activity.

The obtained diagnostic data has enabled us to reveal the main activities of the head on initiation of the development of positive professional identification of employees of the Committee of Inquiry for increasing their professional efficiency:

–creation of a considered policy of accounting the motivational sphere for involvement in a service in the Committee of Inquiry of employees with a high professional resource;



- increasing the education level and professional development of employees of the Committee of Inquiry, inclusion of educational programs for increasing the level of professional identification of employees into programs of professional development;
- the organization of study courses of employees in units with the most favorable psychological climate;
- forming and increasing the positive image of employees of the Committee of Inquiry (interaction with the press, public organizations, educational institutions).

Consideration of features of professional identification of employees should become an obligatory component of effective leadership in the Committee of Inquiry. The head working in specific conditions of the Committee of Inquiry is in a situation of search of potential resources of employees. If they are activated, it is possible to achieve more effective and productive professional activity. Professional identity and its dynamic component, professional identification become the kind of resource.

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