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Veronica PRISACARU

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PRELIMINARIES

The course unit *Social and Economic Psychology* is designed to explore both theoretical and practical aspects of psychological tools in management, aiming to enhance performance in managerial roles as well as at the individual and group levels. The curriculum emphasizes the complex socio-psychological dimensions of personality, viewed both as a subject and an object within managerial processes. Key psychological concepts addressed in the course include leadership and authority, intelligence, creativity, team management, managerial communication, labor conflict, decision-making, motivation, market communication, and the design and evaluation of success strategies.

The importance and relevance of this course lie in the growing recognition of psychological culture as a vital component of a successful manager's profile in the contemporary context. Cognitive skills such as self-awareness, understanding others, effective communication, and behavioral influence are now essential in cultivating a positive psychological climate within teams—critical factors for managerial effectiveness.

The course develops core competencies in the practical use of psychological management tools—skills that support the development of one's psychological profile, the formation and maintenance of efficient teams, the cultivation of productive interpersonal dynamics, the optimization of motivation, and the identification and mobilization of internal resources to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency. These competencies also contribute to organizational development, strategic problem-solving, and the implementation of effective solutions in response to diverse challenges.

Skill acquisition is supported by a balanced integration of traditional and modern teaching, learning, and assessment methods. The course prioritizes active student engagement through simula-

tions, educational games, problem-based learning, debates, case studies, group work, project-based tasks, and collaborative partnerships between students and instructors.

Competencies Acquired by Students Can Be Applied in the Following Areas:

- *Managerial Practice* – Facilitating innovative approaches to managerial tasks by considering individual psychological traits, group development stages, the overall psychological climate, and the quality of interpersonal communication.
- *Interpersonal Relations* – Enhancing communication styles, improving integration into social networks, and helping students effectively attain desired roles and social standing.
- *Personal Development* – Supporting the formulation and management of personal success strategies, identifying intrinsic motivational factors, and using them to foster self-directed learning and continuous personal growth.

The *Social and Economic Psychology* course also provides a solid foundation for further specialization in psychological approaches to performance management. It prepares students for advanced studies at the master's level in Economic Sciences or related disciplines, doctoral research in Social and Economic Sciences, and ongoing professional development aligned with labor market demands.

Teaching Language: English

Target Audience: Students enrolled in the Business and Administration bachelor's degree program

1. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PSYCHOLOGY – INTRODUCTORY ASPECTS

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of psychology. The object of study of psychology. 2. The emergence and consolidation of social and economic psychology as a science 3. Objectives and functions of social and economic psychology.	- defines psyche, psychology, social and economic psychology; - elucidates the concept and object of study of psychology and social and economic psychology, its objectives and functions; - describes the conceptual evolution of social and economic psychology; - argues the significance of social and economic psychology in increasing the performance of organizational management.	The graduate autonomously distinguishes the objectives and functions of social and economic psychology and argues their significance for effective human resources management.

Terms of Reference:

- *Psyche* – the spiritual world of a person, consisting of images, ideas, thoughts, representations, and feelings, which reflect the surrounding reality;
- *Psychology* – the science that studies the laws of the emergence, development, and manifestation of the psyche in general, and of human consciousness as a concrete historical personality in particular;
- *Social Psychology* – the science that studies the individual immersed in society, engaged in interaction with others;
- *Economic Psychology* – the science that studies the psychological reflection of production relations, economic policies, and mechanisms.

1.1. The Concept of Psychology. The Object of Study of Psychology

The term *"psychology"* originates from Greek and is formed by merging the words *"psyche"* (soul) and *"logos"* (science, study), which is interpreted as *"the science of the soul"*.

Like most modern sciences, psychology has undergone a long evolution—from its early stages to becoming an independent science. With a history spanning over 2400 years, it existed for a long period in a non-scientific, metaphysical, philosophical, or empirical form, with scientific psychology taking shape only in the 19th century. This circumstance led to a distinction between pre-scientific and scientific psychology (Hassard, 2012).

The title of "father of psychology" is attributed to the ancient Greek scholar Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), who, in his treatise *"On the Soul"* (De Anima), provided the first systematic exposition of psychic phenomena. Aristotle's notable contribution was in identifying psychology as a distinct and original field of knowledge and in proposing the idea of the unity between soul and body. He is considered the author of the first consistent references to the psyche. In his view, the soul (psyche) manifests in various capacities (abilities) for activity: nutritive, sensory, mobile (moving), and intellectual. It is implicitly stated that higher abilities emerge and develop based on the lower ones (Gherghinescu).

Psychic phenomena were also addressed by other Greek philosophers such as Democritus (c. 460–370 B.C.), Plato (c. 427–347 B.C.), and later by scholars like R. Descartes (1596–1650), J. La Mettrie (1709–1751), F. Bacon (c. 1561–1626), J. Locke (1632–1704), G. Leibniz (1646–1716), among others. However, an in-depth study of the psyche as a function of the brain was only possible after advances in physiological and anatomical knowledge about the brain's substrate. Major contributions in this area were made by scholars such as Pierre J. Flourens (1794–1867) and Claude Bernard (1813–1878) (Eţco et al., 2007).

It is believed that the term *"psychology"* first appeared in the title of a book by M. Marulić in 1520, and from 1560 onwards, it was frequently used to denote *"knowledge concerning the soul"* (e.g., Blancard, 1693). The first treatise titled *"Psychology"* dates back to 1590, over 300 years before the crystallization of psychology as an independent science (Ețco et al., 2007).

The term "psychology" gained its modern meaning in the 18th century thanks to the German philosopher C.V. Wolf (1679–1754), who used it in his work *"Psychologia Rationalis."*

A turning point in the consolidation of scientific psychology was the establishment of the first experimental psychology laboratory by Wilhelm Wundt in 1879 in Leipzig. The expansion of experimental methods in the study of psychic phenomena decisively contributed to psychology's separation from philosophy and its establishment as an independent science.

The object of study in psychology as a science is the laws governing the emergence, development, and manifestation of the psyche in general, and of human consciousness as a concrete historical personality in particular (Ețco et al., 2007). The psyche, in turn, is defined as the spiritual world of a person, consisting of images, ideas, thoughts, representations, and feelings, which reflect the surrounding reality. It is also examined as an expression of relational life, a phenomenon inseparably connected to material and quantum structures, a subjective reproduction of objective natural reality, and a product of socio-historical and socio-cultural conditions and determinations (Gherghinescu).

Thus, psychology studies the internal world of the human being as a conscious subject of social development, with the psyche and consciousness considered a distinct form of reflection of objective reality.

The human psyche stands out for its remarkable complexity and remains an inexhaustible subject of research. Since ancient times, the extraordinary versatility of the psyche and the excep-

tional status of psychic phenomena compared to other phenomena in the universe have been acknowledged. Over the years, two main conceptual directions regarding the psyche have emerged: the materialist and the idealist views.

Proponents of the ***idealist*** conception argue that the psyche is primary and exists independently of matter.

The ***materialist*** conception of the psyche is based on the following principles (Gherghinescu):

1. The psyche is considered a secondary phenomenon, originating from matter, which is the primary phenomenon, the substrate, and the basis of the psyche.
2. The psyche is a property of matter organized in a specific way – the brain.
3. The psyche manifests as the brain's capacity to reflect the surrounding material world.

Among the numerous attempts to reveal the essence of the psyche, Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic doctrine has gained and continues to enjoy widespread popularity. According to the "*topographical model*" of the human psyche developed in the early phase of psychoanalysis by S. Freud, human psychic life manifests on three levels: the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. The distinctive features of these levels are presented in Table 1.1.

In 1923, following a revision of the conceptual model of the psychic life, Freud introduced a new approach known as the "three-instance model." According to this model, personality consists of three fundamental structures: the "Id," the "Ego," and the "Superego." Furthermore, in the author's view, while the "Ego" and the "Superego" may contain both conscious and unconscious elements, the "Id" is always unconscious.

The "Id" is described as a primitive and chaotic reservoir of impulses, the place where archaic representations and behaviors are generated.

Table 1.1. Levels of the Human Psyche According to S. Freud's Topographical Model

Level Name	Basic Characteristics	Remarks
Conscious	Stores thoughts, perceptions, feelings, memory, and focus.	Certain content becomes conscious only for a short period of time, quickly moving to the preconscious or unconscious as attention shifts. Consciousness holds only a small part of the total information stored in the brain.
Preconscious	Contains experiences not currently conscious but which can resurface into awareness either spontaneously or with minimal effort.	Acts as a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious.
Unconscious	Represents a "repository" of primitive instinctual impulses, experiences, and emotions that have been repressed from consciousness due to their intensity.	Considered the deepest and most significant region of human reasoning.

Source: Adapted by the author based on (Ețco et al., 2006)

The "Ego" lies at the boundary between the conscious and the unconscious, and serves as the instance that transitions into action, as well as the function responsible for adaptation to reality and exploration of the real world. In other words, the "Ego" derives from the "Id" and represents the "Id" in conscious real life, shaping impulsive needs into forms adapted to reality. It is the component of the psyche responsible for decision-making and acts in accordance with social norms and personal conscience. To withstand unacceptable impulses, the "Ego" also develops and adopts defense mechanisms that allow for behavior capable of restraining such impulses.

The "Superego," in turn, is considered the higher instance, the area of conscience, values, moral representations, ideals, and prohibitions.

A general reflection on the human psyche can be made through the examination of its structure (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. The Structure of the Human Psyche

Psychic Processes	Psychic States	Psychic Traits
Cognitive: Sensations; Perception; Memory; Thinking; Imagination; Language.	**Affective:** Optimism; Enthusiasm; Grief; Sadness; Joy; Anger; Irritation.	Temperament; Character; Aptitudes.
Affective-volitional: Emotions; Feelings; Will.		

Source: Adapted by the author based on (Gherghinescu).

1.2. The Emergence and Consolidation of Social and Economic Psychology as a Science

The emergence and consolidation of social psychology and economic psychology are two separate processes, but they intersect in many ways.

Social psychology began to take shape as a distinct discipline at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, being profoundly influenced by sociology and experimental psychology. Floyd H. Allport, considered the author of the first treatise on social psychology published in 1924, stated that "social psychology studies social behavior and the social consciousness of individuals," and its object of study would be "the study of real or imagined relationships between people in a given social context, insofar

as these affect the individuals involved in that situation" (Chelcea, 2006).

In a more contemporary approach, social psychology studies the individual immersed in society, interacting with others.

As for the field of study of social psychology, it is examined through several areas of interest, as presented in Figure 1.1.



Fig. 1.1 The Constituent Elements of the Field of Study in Social Psychology

Source: Developed by the author based on (Chelcea, 2006)

Economic Psychology, in turn, represents an interdisciplinary branch situated at the intersection of psychology and economics. It studies the psychological reflection of production relationships, policies, and economic mechanisms. Economic psychology emerged in the early 1950s through the synergy of economists with psychological knowledge and psychologists with economic expertise (Yucong, 2019). Economic psychology is concerned with the psychological basis of individuals' economic behaviors and the impact of economic processes on individuals' psychology (*International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences,* 2001). From this, it follows that the subject of study in economic psychology is human behavior in economic contexts, with a focus on how people make economic decisions, perceive risk, value money, consume, save, invest, or work.

Among the key elements of economic psychology are:

- Adoption of economic decisions;
- Consumer behavior;
- Motivation and job satisfaction;
- Social influence on economic behavior, and more.

Economic psychology plays an essential role in understanding how people make economic decisions in the contemporary reality, characterized by uncertainty, information overload, and rapid market changes.

The link between economic psychology and social psychology is deep and complementary, as both disciplines study human behavior but from different angles that frequently intersect.

The role of economic and social psychology in business management is increasingly important, as it contributes to understanding and optimizing human behavior within organizations. The areas in which the role of economic and social psychology manifests in business management are shown in Figure 1.2.



Fig. 1.2. Aspects in Which the Role of Economic and Social Psychology Manifests in Business Management

Source: Developed by the author

The contribution of social and economic psychology to understanding employee behavior is supported by the fact that it provides tools to understand employees' motivations, attitudes, values, and behaviors. As a result, managers become capable of:

1. Creating a healthy organizational climate;
2. Adapting their leadership style;
3. Preventing conflicts and managing teams more effectively.

The increase in motivation and performance occurs as a result of designing effective reward systems, aligning individual goals with the company's objectives, and encouraging active engagement in work.

Optimization of decisions takes place due to the understanding of psychological factors that can either positively or negatively influence the complex decision-making process. The development of leadership and organizational culture occurs as a result of using social psychology tools to analyze the dynamics of influence and communication, specifically: how authentic leaders are formed; how organizational culture influences individual behavior; how cohesion is maintained within a team.

The implications of social and economic psychology in marketing and consumer behavior are explained by the fact that they study: preferences, emotions, and purchasing decisions; brand loyalty; the impact of advertising and price.

From the synthesis of the above, we deduce that economic and social psychology brings an essential human dimension to management. It not only optimizes the internal functioning of the business but also improves relationships with customers and external partners. In an economy increasingly based on knowledge and innovation, a deep understanding of human behavior becomes a strategic competitive advantage.

1.3. Objectives and Functions of Social and Economic Psychology

The growing complexity of managerial responsibilities in the current stage imposes a series of *objectives* that are both significant and challenging for managerial psychology, which, by its essence,

combines social and economic psychology. Among these, we can highlight in particular:

- *Understanding Human Behavior in Social and Economic Contexts*
  - Analyzes how individuals interact with each other within groups and organizations.
  - Studies the influence of norms, values, and social pressures on economic decisions.
- *Explaining Decision-Making Mechanisms*
  - Explores how people make decisions related to consumption, investment, work, etc., both rationally and irrationally (influenced by cognitive biases).
- *Optimizing Interpersonal and Group Relationships*
  - Aims to improve communication, cooperation, and conflict management within teams and organizations.
- *Increasing Economic and Social Efficiency through Adaptive Behaviors*
  - Proposes solutions for employee motivation, customer loyalty, and creating a healthy and productive work environment.
- *Supporting Managerial Decision-Making*
  - Provides empirical support for developing internal policies for firms.

The *direct functions* of social and economic psychology within organizations are summarized as:

1. Utilizing psychological tools in recruitment, selection, staffing, personnel development, and career management processes.

2. Leveraging psychological instruments in decision-making processes.

3. Effectively applying psychological approaches to optimize the organization's motivational system.

4. Using psychological intervention tools to obtain committed engagement and improve individual and group performance.

5. Applying diagnostic tools to assess social-psychological climate, work conflicts, communication quality, and relevant methods for addressing identified issues.

6. Effectively using psychological tools to build organizational image and improve communication quality with the market.

7. Identifying the most relevant psychological tools and applying them effectively in other situations faced by the organization: communication with clients, consumers, business partners, mass media, higher hierarchical authorities, etc., negotiating contracts, resolving external conflicts, and more.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Case Study. As the manager of a company, you had a meeting with a specialist in social and economic psychology, who, being funded through a project, offered to hold 40 hours of courses in this field. The audience may consist of senior and middle-level managers within the company.

Task:

a) Identify at least 10 topics that you consider relevant for the course with senior managers and 10 for the course with middle managers.

b) Justify the relevance of these topics for the company.

Case Study. The company "EcoTech Solutions" is experiencing a decline in productivity and an increase in employee turnover. Managers have observed that employees are demotivated, conflicts between departments occur frequently, and communication is ineffective. The management intends to implement measures to improve the organizational climate and team performance.

Tasks:

Based on the situation of „EcoTech Solutions":

a) Identify at least three objectives of social and economic psychology that are relevant to this situation.

b) Specify at least three functions of social and economic psychology (for example: descriptive, explanatory, predictive, and applied functions).

c) Explain how each function can contribute to solving the organization's problems.

d) Develop a human resources management intervention proposal that includes:

- Two measures to improve communication and interpersonal relationships;
- Two measures to increase employee motivation and performance;
- An argument regarding the role of social and economic psychology in increasing the effectiveness of organizational management.

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Clarify the basic stages in the evolution of psychology as a science.
- What constitutes the object of study of psychology?
- Describe the essence of the psyche.
- List the elements of the structure of the psyche.
- When did social psychology emerge as an independent branch of psychology?
- Describe the field of study of social psychology.
- When did economic psychology crystallize?
- Specify the main key elements of economic psychology.
- In what aspects does the role of economic and social psychology manifest in enterprise management?
- Clarify the objectives of social and economic psychology.
- Describe the functions of social and economic psychology.

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2. PERSONALITY AS AN OBJECT AND SUBJECT OF MANAGEMENT

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of personality. Factors determining personality. 2. Personality dimensions and their impact on managerial activity. 3. Individual-typological peculiarities of the personality, their manifestation in managerial activity.	- defines personality, temperament, character, aptitudes; - analyzes personality dimensions; - elucidates the impact of personality dimensions on managerial activity; - identifies and characterizes the individual-typological peculiarities of personality; - explains how the manifestation of individual-typological peculiarities of personality occurs in the performance of managerial duties.	The graduate autonomously identifies the dimensions and individual-typological particularities of the personality and individualizes communication with subordinates and colleagues taking these into account.

Terms of Reference:

- *Personality* – a bio-psycho-socio-cultural organization that represents a dynamically structured synthesis of innate dispositions and acquired traits;
- *Personality Dimension* – the fundamental traits that characterize an individual's typical patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving;
- *Temperament* – the dynamic-energetic aspect of personality;
- *Character* – refers to the set of moral and ethical traits that define a person's behavior and values;
- *Attitude* – the core component of character, representing the internal position adopted by a person toward a social situation;
- *Aptitude* – a trait or a combination of psychological and physical traits that ensure success in a given activity.

2.1. The Concept of Personality. Factors Determining Personality

Personality is at the center of attention in modern sociology, psychology, pedagogy, and ethics.

It is well known that people resemble each other, but at the same time differ; they resemble one another through certain common traits and differ through a set of particular attributes that give each of us a specific individuality.

Personality is a bio-psycho-socio-cultural organization that represents a dynamically structured synthesis of innate dispositions and acquired traits. Personality is also examined as consistent patterns in an individual's way of feeling, thinking, and behaving (John et al., 2008).

By personological factors, we mean the defining factors of personality:

1. heredity;
2. environment;
3. situation.

From this perspective, the following factors were researched, depending on the degree of involvement in managerial activity (Eţco et al., 2006):

- physical and constitutional factors (height, weight, anthropological characteristics, constitutional type, temperamental type, physical endurance, etc.);
- intelligence quotient (IQ);
- self-confidence;
- sociability;
- willpower;
- influencing ability;
- enthusiasm;
- generosity;
- self-control;
- intuition.

Of course, these traits are involved to varying degrees in managerial activity and should be assessed in the professional selection of managers.

There are also behavioral-managerial factors that have a beneficial effect on human relationships:

– smile;
– eye contact;
– handshake;
– kind words;
– friendly gestures;
– politeness;
– good mood;
– kindness;
– helpfulness;
– greeting;
– attire, etc.

The structure of personality can be presented as follows (Eţco et al., 2007):

1. *Personality Orientation* – manifests in needs, necessities, interests, ideals, beliefs, dominant motives of activity, behavior, worldview.
2. *Psychological Processes and Cognitive Activity:*
   – *Cognitive:* sensations, perceptions, memory, thinking, language, imagination;
   – *Volitional:* willpower;
   – *Affective:* emotions and feelings.
3. *Individual-Typological Characteristics* – manifest in temperament, character, and aptitudes.
4. *Morphophysiological Characteristics* – include anatomical-physiological and age-related characteristics, which are directly dependent on the functional particularities of the brain.

2.2. Personality Dimensions and Their Impact on Managerial Activity

The concept of *personality dimension* refers to the fundamental traits that characterize an individual's typical patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving. These dimensions are stable over time and influence how a person interacts with others and responds to different situations.

Psychologists have discovered that there are five basic, yet general, dimensions that describe personality (Ețco et al., 2006):

- *Extraversion* – represents the extent to which someone is sociable, friendly, and self-confident. Extraverts enjoy social situations, seeking sensations and positive emotions, while those who score low on this dimension (introverts) tend to avoid them.
- *Emotional Stability* – measures the degree to which a person maintains appropriate emotional control, balance, and self-confidence. Individuals with low emotional stability tend to experience self-doubt and depression.
- *Agreeableness* – measures how friendly a person is. Agreeable individuals are characterized by trust, loyalty, altruism, cooperation, modesty, and attentiveness to others. Less agreeable individuals tend to be distant.
- *Conscientiousness* – reflects the extent to which a person is responsible and achievement-oriented. Conscientious individuals are dependable, positively motivated, competent, organized, self-disciplined, and possess a strong sense of duty, a drive to succeed, and reflective capacity. Less conscientious people are not the best acquisition for an organization.
- *Openness to Experience* – measures the extent to which a person thinks flexibly and is receptive to new ideas. Open individuals are inclined toward activity and innovation, while less open individuals often resist change. These dimensions

are relatively independent, meaning they can form a wide variety of combinations.

Personality dimensions can determine not only the management style adopted but also the overall performance of a leader within an organization. Understanding one's own personality profile can help managers maximize their strengths and address any potential weaknesses.

Their direct influence on managerial activity is manifested as follows:

- ***Decision-Making:*** A conscientious and emotionally stable manager is more likely to make rational, well-founded decisions.
- ***Communication:*** Extraversion and agreeableness positively influence communication style and the ability to resolve conflicts.
- ***Team Motivation:*** Personality influences leadership style – for example, an open and empathetic manager tends to be more democratic and inspirational.
- ***Adaptability:*** Managers who are open to experience are more flexible in the face of organizational changes.

Example of How Personality Dimensions Manifest in Managerial Activity

Consider a situation in which a company must implement a new digital transformation strategy that requires restructuring work processes and training employees. Different personality dimensions directly influence how the manager handles this challenge.

- ***Decision-Making:*** A manager with high levels of ***conscientiousness and emotional stability*** carefully analyzes available information, evaluates risks and benefits, and develops a realistic implementation plan. Even when employees express concerns, the manager remains calm and makes rational, evidence-based decisions rather than reacting emotionally.

- ***Communication:*** A manager who is highly ***extraverted and agreeable*** communicates openly with employees, organizes regular meetings, and encourages questions and feedback. When conflicts arise between departments, the manager acts as a mediator, listens to different perspectives, and promotes cooperation and mutual understanding.
- ***Team Motivation:*** A manager characterized by ***openness and empathy*** adopts a democratic and inspirational leadership style. Instead of imposing changes unilaterally, the manager involves employees in decision-making, recognizes their contributions, and motivates them by emphasizing opportunities for professional growth and organizational improvement.
- ***Adaptability:*** A manager with high ***openness to experience*** demonstrates flexibility in dealing with unexpected challenges. For example, when employees suggest more efficient ways to use the new digital system, the manager willingly modifies the original implementation plan and encourages experimentation and innovation.

2.3. Individual-Typological Peculiarities of the Personality and Their Manifestation in Managerial Activity

2.3.1. Temperament

Temperament constitutes the dynamic-energetic aspect of personality (Ețco et al., 2006).

- *Dynamic* because it provides information about how fast or slow, mobile or rigid, accelerated or calm, consistent or inconsistent an individual's behavior is.
- *Energetic* because it indicates the amount of energy an individual possesses and, more importantly, how it is consumed.

In psychology, the term temperament refers to the way a subject reacts and manifests, from a dynamic-energetic point of view,

in various situations. Psychologists unanimously consider temperament to be innate.

Throughout the history of science, there have been many attempts to explain these individual differences among people. The oldest is the theory of the Greek physician Hippocrates (5th century BC), who explained individual differences through the proportion of four substances in the body: blood, yellow bile, phlegm, and black bile. The Greeks referred to the mix of these juices as "crasis." The Latin word for such a mix was "temperamentum," from which the term "temperament" derives.

I. P. Pavlov made a significant scientific contribution by discovering the properties of higher nervous activity. He demonstrated that the innate combination of these traits defines what we call temperament. Pavlov studied the organism as a whole and highlighted the brain as a component that regulates the activity of all organs and tissues. Using the method of conditioned reflexes, Pavlov revealed the laws of higher nervous activity and the fundamental traits of nervous processes. His theory about the properties of nervous processes and the resulting types of nervous activity explain the primary forms of behavior in both higher animals and humans. Therefore, temperament depends directly on biological structure and is not unique to humans but also found in animals.

Pavlov correlated general types of nervous systems (common to both humans and animals) with the four temperaments defined in antiquity:

a) The *Strong-Balanced-Mobile Type* corresponds to the **sanguine** temperament: lively, sociable, communicative, adaptable, and self-controlled;

b) The *Strong-Balanced-Inert Type* corresponds to the **phlegmatic** temperament: calm, quiet, unsociable, slow, poorly adaptable to new situations, less impressionable, resistant to stress and frustration;

c) The *Strong-Unbalanced-Excitable Type* corresponds to the **choleric** temperament: resilient, hyperactive, energetic, irascible,

impulsive, emotionally explosive, behaviorally unstable, tends to dominate interpersonal relations, quickly bored with monotony;

d) The *Weak Type* corresponds to the **melancholic** temperament: inward, withdrawn, sensitive, and delicate.

Temperamental Profiles – Psychological Characteristics

Sanguine Type

Positive aspects: optimism, sociability, courage, cheerfulness, good mood, high reactivity, open character, impressionability, sensitivity, adaptability, friendliness, fast actions, ease in engaging in activities, expressive richness, decisiveness, activism, energy, etc.

Negative aspects: superficial attitudes, lack of depth, self-satisfaction, weak and unstable feelings, flat emotional experiences, fluctuations in emotions, suggestibility, easily swayed from decisions, inconsistency, exaggerated expressiveness, superficiality, lack of concentration, impulsiveness, talkativeness.

Melancholic Type

Positive aspects: seriousness, sense of duty and responsibility, intense and long-lasting affective processes, depth of feelings, sensitivity, inwardness, dependency, obedience, authenticity, diligence, perseverance, conscientiousness, etc.

Negative aspects: lack of confidence, pessimism, unsociability, anxiety-prone, tendency to withdraw, insecurity, sadness, inferiority complex, low adaptability and mobility, weak reactivity.

Choleric Type

Positive aspects: high reactivity, intense affective processes, richness and intensity of reactions, pleasure in overcoming difficulties, strong-willed traits, tendency toward passion.

Negative aspects: excitability, irritability, aggression, dissatisfaction, anger, emotional instability, bias, impatience, dominance, stubbornness, oppositional behavior.

Phlegmatic Type

Positive aspects: balance, tendency to be content, calm, friendliness, composure, good mood, tolerance, patience, reliability, perseverance, strong-willed traits, attachment, thoughtfulness.

Negative aspects: low reactivity, weaker and poorer affective processes, lower adaptability to change, tendency to be overly calculated, lack of passion, monotony, tendency toward routine, pedantry, laziness.

Example of How Different Temperamental Types Manifest in Managerial Activity

Imagine that a company is facing a serious problem: an important client has complained about delays in product delivery and is considering terminating the contract.

The sanguine manager reacts with optimism and immediately contacts the client. They organize a meeting, communicate confidently, reassure the client, and motivate the team by emphasizing that the situation can be solved. Their strengths are excellent communication and adaptability, although they may overlook some details while focusing on maintaining positive relationships.

The choleric manager responds rapidly and decisively. They call an emergency meeting, assign responsibilities, set strict deadlines, and demand immediate action. Their determination and energy can help resolve the crisis quickly. However, they may become impatient, criticize employees harshly, or make decisions without sufficient consultation.

The melancholic manager carefully analyzes the causes of the delays before taking action. They review reports, identify mistakes in the process, and prepare a detailed corrective plan to prevent similar problems in the future. Their strengths are accuracy and responsibility, but they may spend too much time analyzing the situation and become overly concerned about possible negative consequences.

The phlegmatic manager remains calm and composed despite the pressure. They listen to all parties involved, gather information systematically, and propose a balanced and realistic solution. They help reduce tension within the team and ensure that decisions are implemented consistently. However, their cau-

tious approach may slow down the response when immediate action is required.

This example demonstrates that each temperament influences **leadership style, decision-making, communication, and crisis management** differently. In practice, effective managers often combine characteristics of several temperamental types, using the strengths of each while learning to control their limitations.

2.3.2. Character

The word "character" is widely used, particularly when we want to assess a person's behavior, which expresses their personality and attitude toward the world. People have different attitudes toward their environment, others, work, and themselves. These attitudes are expressed through behavior. When these behavioral forms are not random but stable and persistent, they become part of the person's personality (Ețco et al., 2006).

The term "character" is of Greek origin and means pattern, imprint, or mark. Applied to people, it refers not so much to physical appearance but to the psychological and spiritual structures we deduce from one's behavioral patterns in activity and social relationships.

Character refers to the set of moral and ethical traits that define a person's behavior and values. Character is shaped by personal experiences, education, and cultural influences. It reflects how an individual chooses to act in various situations, especially when faced with moral decisions.

Unlike temperament, which is present in all situations—natural or social—character manifests only in social situations. It develops exclusively through interaction with the socio-cultural environment, acting as a specific mechanism for relating to and adapting to its characteristics and demands.

Structure of Character – a set of human traits that are interrelated in different ways.

The structure of character includes elements of:

1. Affective nature (emotions and feelings);
2. Motivational nature (interests, needs, ideals);
3. Cognitive nature (representations, concepts, judgments);
4. Volitional nature (traits, willpower), all of which stem from social existence and mediate the individual's relationships with others and with society as a whole.

The proportions of these four components vary between individuals.

Attitude – the core component of character, representing the internal position adopted by a person toward a social situation.

Classification of Attitudes

By reference object, attitudes are divided into:

1. Attitudes toward Oneself
- self-appraisal;
- self-evaluation;
- self-guidance.

2. Attitudes toward Society
- attitude toward work, norms, principles;
- attitude toward institutions (family, school, hospital, university);
- attitude toward political organization;
- attitude toward other people;
- attitude toward surrounding objects.

Character traits include:
- ***Orientation of Character*** – ability to filter external influences (natural and socio-cultural) through moral-value criteria and respond with appropriate behavioral reactions;
- ***Richness of Character*** – includes the diversity and complexity of attitudes, values, and norms internalized and made part of one's psycho-socio-moral foundation;
- ***Self-control*** – the ability to control impulses, delay behavioral responses, or direct them according to moral-value prescriptions;

- ***Consistency*** – harmony between ideas, attitudes, speech, and actions, and between morals and behavior;
- ***Generosity*** – altruistic inclination, sensitivity to others' needs, desire to help, compassion, empathy, and human solidarity;
- ***Strength*** – capacity to dominate circumstances and oneself, firmness and perseverance in realizing one's goals through morally accepted means;
- ***Flexibility (dynamics)*** – openness to values, continuous assimilation of norms and translating them into intrinsically motivated behavior;
- ***Discipline*** – optimal alignment with a system of norms and strict adherence to them;
- ***Optimism*** – confidence in oneself, in others, and in life.

Example of How Character Traits Manifest in Managerial Activity

Imagine that a company is implementing a major organizational change, including the introduction of a new digital system and the restructuring of several departments. Different character traits can be observed in the manager's behavior:

- ***Orientation of Character:*** The manager evaluates the proposed changes according to ethical principles and organizational values. Instead of focusing only on reducing costs, the manager considers the impact on employees and chooses solutions that are both efficient and fair.
- ***Richness of Character:*** The manager demonstrates a broad set of values, such as responsibility, integrity, respect, and commitment. They encourage collaboration, support employee development, and promote an organizational culture based on trust and professionalism.
- ***Self-control:*** During meetings, some employees strongly criticize the restructuring process. Although under pressure, the manager remains calm, controls emotions, listens carefully, and

responds professionally rather than reacting impulsively.

- ***Consistency:*** The manager repeatedly communicates the importance of transparency and employee involvement and then acts accordingly by providing regular updates and consulting team members before making important decisions. There is alignment between what the manager says and what the manager does.
- ***Generosity:*** Recognizing that some employees feel anxious about the changes, the manager organizes training sessions, offers mentoring opportunities, and provides emotional support to help employees adapt successfully.
- ***Strength:*** Despite resistance and uncertainty, the manager remains determined to achieve the organizational objectives. They make difficult decisions, address challenges directly, and persevere in implementing the change while respecting ethical standards.
- ***Flexibility (dynamics):*** The manager is open to feedback and willing to modify implementation plans when employees propose more effective solutions. They continuously learn and adapt their management approach to new circumstances.
- ***Discipline:*** The manager establishes clear deadlines, follows organizational procedures, monitors progress systematically, and ensures that all activities comply with company policies and professional standards.
- ***Optimism:*** Even when difficulties arise during the implementation process, the manager maintains a positive attitude, expresses confidence in the team's abilities, and motivates employees by emphasizing opportunities for growth and improvement.

This example illustrates that **character traits significantly influence managerial effectiveness.** Managers with well-developed character traits are more capable of making ethical decisions, managing change, maintaining productive relationships, motivating employees, and leading organizations successfully through challenging situations.

2.3.3. Aptitudes

An aptitude is a trait or a combination of psychological and physical traits that ensure success in a given activity (Ețco et al., 2006). This definition emphasizes efficiency and performance. Any trait or psychological process, when considered in terms of its efficiency, becomes an aptitude (e.g., memory becomes the aptitude to memorize; observation becomes perceptual aptitude).

Aptitude measures how well the personality system is organized for adaptive and instrumental activity. It answers the question: "What can and does a person actually achieve in the activities they perform?" It is always linked to performance and efficiency, both in quantity and quality.

No single aptitude ensures success. High performance results from a combination of aptitudes. Therefore, aptitude is a personality component that conditions success in an activity.

We distinguish: a) General aptitudes and b) Special aptitudes.

a) ***General Aptitude*** – This is the aptitude that is required and involved in any kind of human activity or in solving different types of tasks. General aptitudes make up the instrumental-adaptive repertoire of any individual, ensuring a satisfactory relationship and adaptation to the changing conditions of the environment.

General aptitudes can be divided into:

1. ***Sensory Aptitudes*** (speed, perceptual plasticity);
2. ***Psychomotor Aptitudes*** (strength of movements, speed, and precision);
3. ***Intellectual Aptitudes*** (intelligence, which is a synthesis of several intellectual aptitudes: observational skills, memory, verbal fluency, flexibility of thought, inductive and deductive reasoning, distributed attention, etc.).

b) ***Special Aptitudes*** are instrumental structures of personality that ensure the achievement of performance in specific areas of professional activity.

Example of How Aptitudes Manifest in Managerial Activity

Consider a manager responsible for leading a company through the launch of a new product. Successful management of this project depends on a combination of ***general and special aptitudes.***

General Aptitudes

1. Sensory Aptitudes (speed and perceptual flexibility)

The manager quickly notices changes in employees' attitudes during meetings and recognizes early signs of resistance to the new project. By accurately perceiving nonverbal cues and changes in the business environment, the manager can address problems before they escalate.

Example: During a presentation, the manager observes that several team members appear confused about the project objectives. Recognizing this immediately, the manager pauses the meeting and clarifies expectations, preventing misunderstandings and future errors.

2. Psychomotor Aptitudes (speed and precision of actions)

Although managerial work is primarily intellectual, psychomotor aptitudes are reflected in the manager's ability to coordinate multiple activities efficiently, use digital tools effectively, and respond promptly to urgent situations.

Example: During an online meeting with international partners, the manager simultaneously presents financial data, answers questions, and coordinates communication among team members without losing accuracy or focus.

3. Intellectual Aptitudes (intelligence, memory, reasoning, attention, verbal fluency)

Intellectual aptitudes are particularly important in managerial activity because they support decision-making, problem-solving, and strategic thinking.

Example: The manager analyzes market information, remembers previous sales trends, identifies patterns in customer behavior, and develops a strategic plan for launching the new product. The manager also communicates ideas clearly and persuades employees to support the strategy.

Special Aptitudes

Special aptitudes enable managers to achieve high performance in specific professional activities.

Example: A project manager demonstrates special aptitudes for leadership and project coordination by allocating resources efficiently, negotiating with suppliers, motivating employees, and ensuring that all project milestones are completed on time.

Similarly, a human resources manager demonstrates special aptitudes in recruitment and talent management by accurately evaluating candidates, identifying employees' potential, and designing effective development programs.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Practical Assignment. Develop a questionnaire for evaluating the personality dimensions of a candidate for a managerial position.

Practical Assignment. Develop a job profile (professiogram) of a successful manager, identifying the necessary temperamental traits, character traits, and aptitudes (both general and specific).

Case Study. A medium-sized consulting company has recently created a project team responsible for implementing a new digital management system. The team manager supervises six employees occupying different positions:

- *Senior Specialist* – highly experienced, analytical, and detail-oriented; prefers working independently and carefully evaluates information before making decisions.
- *Marketing Coordinator* – energetic, sociable, and enthusiastic; enjoys teamwork and frequently proposes new ideas but sometimes overlooks details.
- *IT Specialist* – creative and innovative; performs best when given autonomy and flexibility but becomes frustrated by excessive rules and control.

- *Human Resources Officer* – emotionally sensitive and empathetic; builds positive relationships with colleagues but is easily affected by criticism and interpersonal tensions.
- *Administrative Assistant* – organized, responsible, and reliable; prefers clear instructions and structured tasks and experiences discomfort in uncertain situations.
- *Junior Specialist* – motivated and eager to learn but lacks confidence and requires guidance and feedback from the manager.

During the first months of the project, several problems emerged:

- Communication difficulties between team members;
- Increased tension due to different working styles and personalities;
- Unequal participation in meetings and decision-making;
- Delays in completing tasks because responsibilities were not assigned according to employees' strengths and characteristics;
- Decreased motivation among some team members.

Senior management asks the team manager to reorganize the team's work by taking into account employees' personality characteristics, temperaments, abilities, and individual differences.

You are the Team Manager. Analyze the situation and make management decisions that will improve communication, collaboration, and performance.

Tasks:

a) For each position:

1. Identify the possible personality dimensions and individual-typological characteristics.
2. Determine the employee's strengths and possible limitations.
3. Explain how these characteristics may influence work performance and relationships with colleagues.

b) Develop an individualized communication strategy for each employee.

Specify:
1. the most appropriate communication style;
2. the type of feedback that should be provided;
3. communication approaches that should be avoided;
4. methods for encouraging participation and engagement.

c) As the team manager:
1. Assign responsibilities to each employee according to their personality characteristics and abilities.
2. Justify your decisions.
3. Explain how individualized task allocation can improve team performance.

d) Assume that disagreements arise because some employees prefer quick decisions and active discussions, while others prefer reflection and detailed analysis. As the manager:
1. Identify the causes of these differences.
2. Propose concrete actions to manage the situation.
3. Explain how you would ensure effective collaboration among employees with different personalities and temperaments.

e) Develop a three-month action plan that includes:
1. strategies for individualizing communication;
2. measures for increasing motivation and engagement;
3. methods for reducing conflicts and improving cooperation;
4. approaches for supporting employees with different personality characteristics;
5. indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of your managerial interventions.

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. State the essence of personality.
2. Specify the elements that form the structure of personality.

3. Clarify the concept of personality dimension.
4. Characterize the dimensions of personality.
5. Argue the importance of knowing the dimensions of personality in managerial activities.
6. Specify the individual-typological peculiarities of personality.
7. State the essence of temperament.
8. Characterize the types of temperament.
9. Explain how temperamental traits manifest in certain situations within work/managerial activities.
10. State the concept of character.
11. Clarify the elements that form the structure of character.
12. Present the definition of aptitudes.
13. What types of aptitudes do you know?
14. Explain the essence of general and special aptitudes.

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3. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF LEADERSHIP AND AUTHORITY

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. Psychological aspects of the leadership. 2. The relationship between the manager's personality and leadership styles. 3. Psychological aspects of authority. Types of authority in relation to the manager's personality.	- defines leadership and authority; - distinguishes the particularities of different leadership styles; - analyzes the relationship between the manager's personality and leadership styles; - distinguishes and elucidates the psychological aspects of authority; - analyzes the relationship between the manager's personality and types of authority; - argues the impact of leadership and manager's authority on the work group performance; - proposes strategies for rationalizing the leadership style; - proposes ways to establish authentic authority.	The graduate autonomously adapts the leadership style to the organizational context and manages his or her behavior in order to develop an authentic authority.

Terms of Reference:

- *Leadership* – a process by which an individual influences a group of people to achieve a common goal;
- *Leadership Style* – the specific way in which a leader exercises influence over the members of a group, coordinates their activities, and makes decisions to achieve common objectives;
- *Authority* – the right and ability of a manager to influence their subordinates.

3.1. Psychological Aspects of the Leadership

The etymological root of the word *leader* comes from the Anglo-Saxon term *"laed"*, which means *path* or *way*. The verb *"laeden"* means *to travel*. This etymological origin suggests a broader and more enduring orientation than simply teaching horses how to behave.

At a quick glance, leadership is a process by which a person influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.

There is a wide variety of definitions of leadership, yet each of them includes certain specific elements that are essential to all definitions:

- It is a *process;*
- It involves *influence;*
- It occurs in the *context of a group* (you need at least two people);
- It involves achieving *objectives.*

Thus, Northouse (1997) defined leadership as *"a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."*

The *psychological aspects of leadership* refer to the mental, emotional, and behavioral processes that influence how a leader fulfills their role and interacts with the group. These are essential for understanding leadership effectiveness beyond formal skills or organizational structures. They also lead to the predominance of one leadership style or another in a person's leadership behavior.

Leadership is not merely a function or a position – it is a deeply psychological process involving empathy, self-awareness, influence, and the ability to build functional relationships in pursuit of common goals.

Leadership Style refers to the specific manner in which a leader exercises influence over the members of a group, coordinates their activities, and makes decisions to achieve common objectives.

Kurt Lewin, one of the founders of social psychology, described three leadership styles (authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire) in

an experimental study conducted in 1939 together with his collaborators Ronald Lippitt and Ralph K. White (Lippitt et al., 1939):

- *Autocratic and Authoritarian Leaders* – decision-making power is concentrated in the hands of the leader; very motivating for the leader; decisions are made faster;
- *Democratic and Participative Leaders* – the leader consults with the group and then represents its ideas; the group is motivated; cooperation is encouraged;
- *"Free reign" or Laissez-faire Leaders* – the group leads itself, makes its own decisions, and chooses its own methods of action.

Depending on the formalization of the leadership title, two types can be distinguished:

1. *Formal Leaders* – appointed to the role and position by superiors;
2. *Informal Leaders* – unofficial, often chosen by the group they are part of (see Table 3.1).

It should be noted that the concept of formal and informal leaders is not attributed to a single author. It has been clearly defined and developed within organizational theory and the sociology of organizations, particularly in the first half of the 20th century. One of the most important early contributions in this regard came from Chester Barnard (1938).

Table 3.1. Characteristics of Formal and Informal Leaders

Formal Leaders	Informal Leaders
• Are officially appointed to a position	• Are unofficial leaders, who emerge due to their natural leadership abilities
• Intend to lead	• Do not necessarily have the intention to lead
• Take responsibility for the team's actions	• Do not bear full responsibility for the entire team
• Their authority flows from the organization to the people	• Their authority flows from the people to the organization

Source: Developed by the author

Daniel Goleman (2000) identified six types of leaders and their associated leadership styles, with the note that each type of leader corresponds to a specific leadership approach:

- *The Pacesetting Leader* sets high standards for performance and expects excellence and self-direction from others. In one sentence: *"Do as I do, now."* This style works best when the team is already motivated, skilled, and fast results are required. Overuse of this style can overwhelm the team and destroy innovation.
- *The Authoritative Leader* mobilizes people toward a vision and focuses on end goals while allowing individual freedom on how to achieve them. In one sentence: *"Come with me."* This style works well when a new vision is needed, or circumstances have changed. It inspires entrepreneurial spirit and mission enthusiasm but is less effective when the team consists of experts who know more than the leader.
- *The Affiliative Leader* builds emotional bonds and harmony within the organization. In one sentence: *"People come first."* This approach is effective in times of stress, trauma recovery, or when rebuilding trust. Overuse may lead to poor performance and loss of direction.
- *The Coaching Leader* develops people for the future. In one sentence: *"Try this."* This style is most effective when the leader aims to help team members grow. However, it is ineffective if the team is unwilling to change or the leader lacks the necessary skills.
- *The Coercive Leader* demands immediate compliance. In one sentence: *"Do what I tell you."* This approach is suitable in crisis situations, such as natural disasters or emergencies, or when all other methods have failed. Improper use can lead to alienation, reduced flexibility, and stifled creativity.
- *The Democratic Leader* builds consensus through participation. In one sentence: *"What do you think?"* It works well when the team needs to develop a plan, define a goal, or make decisions. It is not suitable in emergencies or when team members lack sufficient information or expertise.

James MacGregor Burns (1978) introduced the concepts of Transactional and Transformational Leadership:

- *Transactional Leaders* identify followers' expectations and respond by linking effort to reward. The leader is empowered to assess, correct, and train subordinates when performance needs improvement and to reward effective outcomes.
- *Transformational Leaders* empower their followers and encourage them to "do more than they originally expected." They motivate people to perform at higher levels, put in greater effort, and show more engagement. The three core processes of transformational leadership include:
  - Increasing followers' awareness of the importance and value of assigned goals and how to achieve them.
  - Encouraging followers to transcend self-interest for the sake of the group and its objectives.
  - Fulfilling higher-order needs of the followers.

Transformational leaders provide encouragement and support, foster growth opportunities, and demonstrate trust and respect. They help build self-confidence and promote personal development.

3.2. The Relationship Between the Manager Personality and Leadership Styles

The effectiveness of leadership in organizations is strongly influenced by the personal characteristics of the manager. In this sense, leadership style is not only a result of formal training or organizational position, but also a reflection of stable personality traits that shape how a manager thinks, communicates, and interacts with subordinates. Understanding this relationship is essential for explaining why different managers adopt different leadership approaches even in similar organizational contexts.

A widely used framework for analyzing personality in relation to leadership is the **Big Five personality model,** which includes five

fundamental traits: **Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability.** These dimensions provide a comprehensive basis for understanding individual differences in managerial behavior.

In this context, the following section examines how each of these personality traits is associated with specific leadership styles, highlighting the psychological mechanisms through which personality influences managerial decision-making, communication patterns, and team coordination.

Table 3.2. Correlations Between Personality Traits and Leadership Styles

Personality Trait	Associated Leadership Style	Explanation
Extraversion	Transformational, Democratic	Extraverted managers are sociable, energetic, and motivated to influence others.
Conscientiousness	Transactional, Transformational	They are organized, goal-oriented, and disciplined.
Agreeableness	Democratic, Laissez-faire	They tend to collaborate, avoid conflict, and support the team.
Openness to Experience	Transformational	Creative thinking, adaptability to change, and innovative vision.
Emotional Stability	Any style (more effective overall)	Emotional stability supports balanced decision-making and leadership effectiveness.

Source: Developed by the author

3.3. Psychological Aspects of Authority. Types of Authority in Relation to the Manager's Personality

Authority is a tool of the individual or collective manager. Broadly speaking, it refers to the right and ability of a manager to influence the people in their subordination. It can be defined as an impersonal force granted to individuals due to the position they occupy in the organization.

Authority is a concept closely related to power, as it represents the capacity of individuals and groups to convince or influence the perceptions or actions of other individuals or groups. In other words, power reflects the individual or collective ability to make others do things they do not want to do.

Specialists have identified the sources of power that confer managerial effectiveness. These include:

1. The ability to reward.
2. The ability to punish.
3. The legitimacy derived from the position of individuals or groups in the organization and the recognition of this position by others.
4. Attractiveness, highlighted by an individual's qualities.
5. Credibility of professional knowledge.

Authority stems from power but is not identical with it. Authority includes the right to command, to decide, to give orders, and to control their execution. Primarily, it reflects the acquisition of rights by an individual (manager), and secondly, the willingness of others to recognize these rights and comply.

A manager's authority can be formal (official), derived from their hierarchical position, based on their title and function. It grants the right to command, to constrain, to punish, and these rights stem from laws and norms. Authority can also be authentic, linked to the manager's personality. It inspires spontaneous respect, engages subordinates without coercion, and fosters voluntary discipline. Authentic authority must first establish the existence of official authority, not the other way around.

Authority is harder to earn but can be lost very easily. The main causes contributing to the loss of authority include: thirst for power, unjustified overestimation of superiors, intimidating subordinates, and superficial work. There is no authority without responsibility, without the obligation to be accountable for the actions taken.

The psychological aspects of authority concern how people perceive, accept, and respond to the influence exercised by a person

with a superior status in a given context (social, educational, professional, etc.). Below are the most important psychological dimensions:

1. *Perception of Legitimacy* – People tend to accept authority when they perceive it as legitimate, i.e., morally, legally, or socially justified.

2. *Conformity and Obedience* – Stanley Milgram's studies (1963) demonstrated how far individuals are willing to go in obeying the orders of an authority figure, even when these orders conflict with their own moral norms. The result: People tend to conform to the commands of an authority figure perceived as legitimate, especially in clear structural contexts (e.g., uniform, title, status).

3. *Social Influence* – Authority does not just mean imposition – it also has a subtle component of influencing and shaping the behavior and thinking of others. Effective leaders create an environment in which their authority is voluntarily accepted, not merely imposed.

4. *Power-Autonomy Relationship* – A significant psychological challenge is balancing authority with personal freedom. Effective authority is perceived as supportive, not repressive – it supports the development of the individual and the group without stifling initiative.

5. *Internalization of Norms* – When authority is perceived positively, people begin to internalize the rules, meaning they follow them even in the absence of control. This is the ideal in education and transformational leadership.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Practical Assignment. Identify the personality dimensions that, in your opinion, correspond optimally to the leadership styles highlighted by Kurt Lewin (autocratic and authoritarian leaders; democratic and participative leaders; "free reign" or laissez-faire leaders).

Practical Assignment. Identify the personality traits of the manager needed to model and maintain authentic authority in relationships with subordinates.

Case Study. As the manager of an organization, you are tasked with solving the following problem: In a subdivision of the organization, the following negative phenomena have been occurring for several months:

- There is a continuous reduction in labor productivity;
- Workers are increasingly violating work discipline, with noted delays and evasion from completing tasks.

You called a meeting with the workers and the manager of the subdivision, during which you found that the psychological climate in the workgroup is actually positive, and the relationships between the workers and the manager seem to be good. As a result, you concluded that there might be certain deficiencies in the exercise of the manager's authority. Identify the social-psychological tools that could be used to conduct a deeper diagnosis of the problem. Elucidate the possible issues related to the authority of the subdivision's manager that may cause such situations in workgroups.

Case Study. A **furniture manufacturing company** has experienced an increase in customer orders and has expanded its production department. A **production manager** is responsible for coordinating 30 employees, including machine operators, quality inspectors, and warehouse workers. Because of tight deadlines and high quality standards, the production manager adopted an **authoritarian leadership style**. The manager makes all decisions independently, closely supervises employees, and rarely involves them in problem-solving.

After three months, several problems appeared:

- Employee motivation decreased;
- Communication between employees and management became limited;
- Workers were afraid of making mistakes;
- Productivity declined by 15%;
- The number of production errors increased;
- Several experienced employees considered leaving the company.

Although the production manager has **formal authority**, employees do not perceive the manager as an authentic leader.

Tasks:

a) Identify the leadership style used by the production manager and mention **two characteristics** of this style.
b) Analyze the relationship between the manager's personality and the chosen leadership style. Explain whether the style is appropriate for the situation.
c) Identify and explain **two types of authority** demonstrated by the production manager.
d) Analyze the impact of the manager's leadership style and authority on:
   - employee motivation;
   - communication;
   - productivity;
   - team performance.
e) Propose **three strategies** for improving the manager's leadership style.
f) Suggest **three actions** that would help the production manager establish authentic authority.

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Summarize the essence of leadership.
2. Present the concept of leadership.
3. Describe the leadership styles proposed by Kurt Lewin.
4. Explain the characteristics of formal and informal leaders.
5. Describe the types of leaders proposed by Daniel Goleman.
6. Clarify the characteristics of transactional and transformational leaders.
7. Describe the correlations between personality and leadership styles.
8. Summarize the essence of authority.
9. Specify the sources of power.
10. Describe the psychological dimensions of authority.

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4. INTELLIGENCE – THE PROBLEM-SOLVING AND PRODUCTIVE DIMENSION IN MANAGERIAL ACTIVITY

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. Conceptual delimitations of intelligence. Intelligence quotient. 2. Types of intelligence 3. Characteristics of intelligence. 4. The relationship between intelligence and personality	- defines intelligence; - identifies and analyzes the types of intelligence; - elucidates the characteristics of intelligence; - argues the relationship between intelligence and personality; - explains the way intelligence manifests itself in concrete situations; - proposes directions for capitalizing on personnel intelligence in the interest of the organization.	The graduate autonomously manages the process of capitalizing on the intelligence of subordinate personnel in order to achieve performance objectives.

Terms of Reference:

- *Intelligence* – a general aptitude that contributes to the formation of an individual's abilities and cognitive adaptation to new situations;
- *Intelligence Quotient (IQ)* – a measure of a person's intelligence and capacity for understanding;
- *Personality* – a bio-psycho-socio-cultural organization that represents a dynamic structured synthesis of an individual's innate dispositions and acquired characteristics.

4.1. Conceptual Delimitations of Intelligence. Intelligence Quotient

Intelligence is a general aptitude that contributes to the formation of an individual's abilities and cognitive adaptation to new situations (Ețco et al., 2006). Intelligence involves a complex system of

operations and abilities that determine the general approach and solution to a wide variety of tasks and problematic situations:

- Adaptation to new situations, generalization, and deduction;
- Anticipation of the outcome of consequences;
- Quick comparison of action alternatives and retention of optimal ones;
- Easy and concrete resolution of problems with increasing difficulty.

Intelligence is a quality of the entire mental activity, an expression of the superior organization of all psychic processes, including affective-motivational and volitional ones. According to Ețco et al. (2006), intelligence is understood as a multifaceted construct, which integrates and systematizes various theoretical perspectives. In this context, several classical conceptual approaches to intelligence are presented below:

- *William Stern:* "Intelligence is the general aptitude of an individual to consciously adapt their thinking to new demands: it is the spiritual capacity for general adaptation to the new demands and conditions of life."
- *David Wechsler:* "Intelligence is the composite and global aptitude of an individual to act opportunely and think rationally, to effectively adjust to the environment in which they live."
- *J. P. Guildford:* "Intelligence is the aptitude to process information, with information meaning all sensations perceived by an individual."
- *H. H. Goddard: "*Intelligence is a unitary, innate mental process determined by the chromosomal background inherited by individuals, which records certain development during childhood and after which an 'arrest of mental development' occurs, a halt that is definitive and barely affected by subsequent influences."

- *Henri Pieron:* "Intelligence is an adaptive capacity, an aptitude for solving new problems posed by existence, but without corresponding to a simple function; it may be a combination of multiple factors."

Adaptation to new and changing situations is also a central theme in the work of Sternberg, who offers a contextual perspective on intelligence and its practical functioning. In this regard, Sternberg (1984) argues for a contextual approach to intelligence, stating that intelligence in context involves the purposeful adaptation to real-world environments that are relevant to an individual's life, the shaping of these environments, and the selection of alternative environments when necessary.

The author explains that adaptation refers to the attempt to achieve a good fit between oneself and the surrounding environment. Environmental shaping is used when attempts to adapt to a given environment are unsuccessful; in such cases, the individual seeks to modify or restructure the environment in order to improve compatibility. When neither adaptation nor shaping is possible or desirable, the individual may resort to selecting an alternative environment in which a better contextual fit can be achieved or is likely to be achieved.

The *Intelligence Quotient* (IQ) is a measure of intelligence and understanding capacity. It is established through tests, the first of which were developed by Binet and Simon in 1905. Binet's test compares the results of a given child with those of a group of the same age, expressing the IQ as the ratio between chronological age and mental age.

The validity and results of IQ tests have been questioned in recent decades. Most modern tests compare an individual's results with those of a group of people of similar ages. A person with a high IQ would have an IQ greater than 145, belonging to the top 1% of the population, while the average IQ falls between 90 and 110. A value below 70 indicates intellectual underdevelopment.

4.2. Types of Intelligence

The concept of intelligence has been a central topic of psychological research for many decades. It has been studied extensively for more than a century, with early attempts focusing on understanding how individuals differ in their cognitive abilities and how these differences influence learning, adaptation, and problem-solving. Over time, intelligence has evolved from a single, general ability model to more complex and multidimensional interpretations.

Edward L. Thorndike (1920) proposes the following classification:

- *Verbal Intelligence* – solving problems formulated in words, the skill to combine abstractions, either in science or in business.
- *Mechanical Intelligence* – the ability to understand and recognize the relationships between material objects.
- *Social Intelligence* – the ability to adapt to situations that arise in society.

French psychologists propose the following classification:

1. *Theoretical Intelligence* (speculative, verbal) – related to success in using words and verbally expressed ideas and assuming exact knowledge of the meaning of the terms used, the ability to interpret symbols;
2. *Practical Intelligence* – the ability to understand situations that involve discovering ways to correct the shortcomings of simple automatisms, in order to adapt to concrete reality;
3. *Subjective Intelligence* – characteristic of people inclined toward literary occupations;
4. *Objective Intelligence* – characteristic of people inclined toward scientific occupations in exact sciences.

According to Hastings School (2025), there are eight types of intelligence (Figure 4.1).

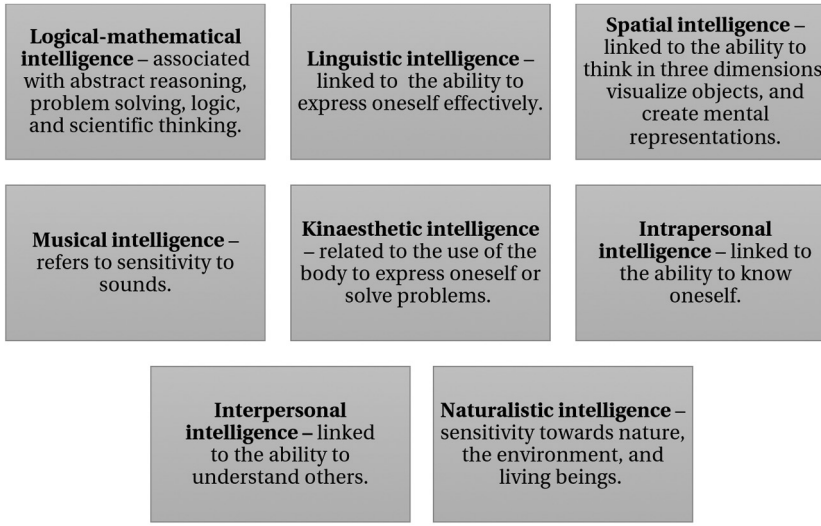


Fig. 4.1. Types of intelligence according to Hastings School
Source: Developed by the author based on (Hastings School, 2025)

In addition to these classifications, modern psychology emphasizes that intelligence is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be fully explained through a single model. Contemporary research highlights the importance of emotional intelligence, which refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as to understand the emotions of others. According to Spasey (2024) „Emotions are mental states that color all thoughts", shaping how people experience and respond to the world, and can make human behavior pleasantly unpredictable, leading the same individual to display different facets of personality, and having the power to make humans delightfully unpredictable such that the same person has different modes of personality.

Another relevant dimension is creative intelligence, which involves the capacity to generate original ideas, find innovative solutions, and adapt flexibly to new and unexpected situations. This type of intelligence is particularly important in today's dynamic and competitive environment.

A special place is given to practical intelligence, which is defined as intelligence that can be applied to real-world problems and used to produce meaningful results (Spasey, 2024). Thus, success in professional and social environments often depends not only on theoretical knowledge, but also on the ability to apply that knowledge effectively in solving concrete problems.

Thus, intelligence should be viewed as an integrated system of cognitive, emotional, and practical abilities that together support human adaptation and development.

4.3. Characteristics of Intelligence

Intelligence is a multidimensional trait that is not limited to cognitive abilities such as reasoning and memory, but also includes emotional and social aspects. A person with high intelligence can develop and apply cognitive, social, and emotional skills in a variety of contexts, which helps them adapt to changes, solve problems, and interact effectively with others.

1. Ability to Solve Novel Situations

One of the fundamental characteristics of intelligence is the capacity to deal with new and unfamiliar situations. While skills and habits are efficient in routine tasks, intelligence becomes essential when the individual encounters problems that cannot be solved through automatic responses.

Intelligent individuals are able to analyze the structure of a new situation, identify relevant information, and construct new solutions rather than relying on memorized patterns.

Example: A manager facing an unexpected market crisis cannot rely on previous procedures alone and must design a new strategy adapted to current conditions.

2. Speed, Flexibility, Mobility, and Adaptability

Intelligence is strongly associated with cognitive efficiency, meaning the ability to process information rapidly and accurately. Intelligent individuals demonstrate:

- fast information processing
- cognitive flexibility (ability to shift between ideas or strategies)
- mental mobility (quick switching between tasks or perspectives)
- adaptability to new conditions

This allows them to respond effectively under time pressure and in dynamic environments.

Example: In a business meeting, an intelligent manager quickly understands new financial data and adjusts decisions without delay.

3. Adaptability and Efficiency in Changing Circumstances

Another essential feature of intelligence is the ability to adjust behavior and thinking according to environmental changes. This involves mental flexibility and situational awareness, allowing individuals to remain effective even under uncertainty.

Intelligent individuals do not resist change; instead, they reinterpret it and find ways to integrate it into their actions.

Example: When a company introduces new digital systems, an intelligent employee adapts quickly instead of resisting the transition.

4. Ability to Learn and Use New Concepts

Intelligence is closely linked t**o** learning capacity**,** especially the ability to understand abstract, complex, or unfamiliar concepts and apply them in different contexts.

Intelligent individuals:

- grasp new information quickly
- form connections between concepts
- transfer knowledge from one domain to another

This transferability is essential for innovation and problem-solving in complex environments.

Example: A manager who learns a new management method and successfully applies it to improve team productivity demonstrates high intellectual adaptability.

5. Problem-Solving Ability

A central component of intelligence is the capacity to identify, analyze, and solve problems effectively. This involves several cognitive operations:

- recognizing patterns and structures
- identifying cause–effect relationships
- generating alternative solutions
- evaluating and selecting the best option

Problem-solving intelligence is especially important in leadership, decision-making, and strategic planning.

Example: When sales decrease, an intelligent manager does not focus on a single cause but analyzes multiple factors such as marketing, pricing, and customer behavior.

6. Motivation as a Component of Academic Intelligence

Intelligence is not only a cognitive ability but also influenced by motivational factors**.** Academic intelligence is strongly supported by intrinsic motivation—the internal desire to learn, explore, and improve continuously.

Intelligent individuals are often driven by:

- curiosity
- personal development
- satisfaction from solving complex problems

This internal motivation leads to sustained engagement and long-term performance, even in the absence of external rewards.

Example: A student who studies advanced topics beyond the curriculum out of interest demonstrates the link between intelligence and intrinsic motivation.

4.4. The Relationship Between Intelligence and Personality

The relationship between intelligence and personality is a complex and interesting subject in psychology. While these two concepts are distinct, they are interconnected and can influence

a person's behaviors and individual traits. In essence, intelligence refers to cognitive abilities, while personality refers to emotional and behavioral traits. However, they can interact in ways that affect how a person thinks, reacts, and interacts with the world.

French psychologist Alain Sarton outlines the following relationships between intelligence and personality (Iațco, 2006):

1. Accuracy of Task Completion vs. Quality of Results

The accuracy with which a task is completed is primarily influenced by intelligence, while the overall quality of the final outcome depends significantly on personality traits, especially those related to caution, responsibility, and decision-making style. Intelligence ensures correct understanding of the task, logical processing of information, and the ability to avoid cognitive errors. However, personality determines whether a person tends to prioritize careful verification or prefers rapid, risk-oriented action.

This explains why:

- some highly intelligent individuals still make mistakes (due to impulsivity or lack of carefulness);
- while individuals with average intelligence may produce accurate work due to high discipline and caution.

Example: A highly intelligent project manager may quickly design an innovative strategy but overlook small operational details due to impatience. In contrast, a less intellectually gifted but very conscientious manager may carefully check all procedures and avoid implementation errors.

2. Speed vs. Effort in Task Execution

Intelligence plays a key role in determining processing speed, while personality determines sustained effort, persistence, and willpower.

- Intelligence helps individuals quickly understand the problem and formulate solutions.
- Personality traits such as perseverance, discipline, and motivation determine how much effort is invested in completing the task properly.

This distinction explains why:

- some individuals make rapid but incomplete discoveries,
- while others, with average intelligence but strong perseverance, achieve significant long-term results.

Example: A researcher may quickly identify a promising hypothesis (high intelligence) but abandon it due to lack of persistence. Another researcher, less quick in idea generation but highly disciplined, continues working systematically and completes a successful study.

3. Association of Ideas vs. Style of Thinking (rigidity or flexibility)

The ability to form associations between ideas or images depends largely on intelligence, especially on cognitive flexibility and fluency. However, the quality of these associations (flexible, creative vs. rigid, structured) is influenced by personality and thinking style.

- Some individuals exhibit a spontaneous, free flow of ideas (divergent thinking).
- Others follow a structured, logical sequence of thoughts (convergent and controlled thinking).

Both styles can be effective, but they serve different purposes in problem-solving.

Example: During a brainstorming session:

- a creative employee generates many unusual and innovative ideas quickly (flexible associative thinking);
- while another employee organizes ideas into a clear, practical implementation plan (structured associative thinking).

Relationship Between IQ and Personality Traits

Research shows moderate correlations between intelligence (IQ) and certain personality traits, especially:

- Conscientiousness (responsibility, discipline, organization)
- Openness to experience (curiosity, imagination, interest in new ideas)

However, these correlations are not strong enough to define a rule. There is significant individual variability:

- individuals with high IQ may be careless, impulsive, or unstructured,
- individuals with average IQ may be highly disciplined and open to learning,
- personality does not determine intelligence, and intelligence does not determine personality.

Example: A highly intelligent employee may struggle with deadlines due to low conscientiousness, while another employee with average cognitive ability consistently delivers high-quality work due to strong organization and responsibility.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Case Study. As the manager of a subdivision (select the activity profile on your own), you are to diagnose the psychological profile of the workgroup for the purpose of assigning particularly significant tasks that require, in addition to certain character traits, an adequate level of intelligence. Out of 25 subordinates, you must select only five who meet the necessary conditions.

Develop a questionnaire containing at least 10 questions that you could use to assess the intelligence level of subordinates.

Case Study. A medium-sized manufacturing company specializing in consumer goods is facing a series of operational and strategic challenges: decreasing production efficiency, delays in decision-making, inconsistencies in product quality, and difficulties in adapting to market changes. To address these issues, the company has established a cross-functional improvement team composed of employees from production, engineering, quality control, marketing, and logistics. Although the team is highly qualified in terms of technical knowledge, management has observed that performance differences are not primarily related to professional experience, but to the way employees use their intellectual capacities in solving problems, making decisions, and collaborating. The organization emphasizes that improving performance depends on the effec-

tive identification, understanding, and capitalization of employees' intelligence in practical managerial activity.

You are the Team Manager responsible for performance optimization. Your main responsibility is to analyze the intellectual potential of employees, identify different types of intelligence, and use them strategically in order to improve productivity and organizational effectiveness. You must make autonomous decisions regarding task allocation, problem-solving strategies, and team coordination based on cognitive strengths.

Tasks:

a) In your managerial activity:

1. Explain how intelligence contributes to decision-making, adaptation to new situations, and productivity in a manufacturing environment.
2. Describe how intelligence manifests in concrete workplace situations (e.g., production errors, logistics delays, quality control issues).

b) Based on psychological research, analyze the following classifications of intelligence used in your team context:

1. Edward L. Thorndike (1920)

- Verbal intelligence – ability to solve problems using language, concepts, and abstractions in scientific and business contexts;
- Mechanical intelligence – understanding relationships between physical objects and production systems;
- Social intelligence – ability to adapt to social and organizational situations.

2. French psychological approach

- Theoretical intelligence – verbal and conceptual reasoning, understanding abstract knowledge;
- Practical intelligence – ability to solve real-life operational problems and adapt to concrete situations;
- Subjective intelligence – inclination toward expressive and interpretative tasks;

- Objective intelligence – orientation toward scientific and technical reasoning.

3. Contemporary psychological perspectives

- Emotional intelligence – ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions in oneself and others;
- Creative intelligence – ability to generate innovative solutions and adapt to new challenges;
- Applied intelligence – ability to use knowledge effectively in real organizational contexts.

Identify which types of intelligence are most relevant for different roles in the company (production, engineering, logistics, marketing, quality control).

Explain how each type of intelligence contributes to solving operational problems.

Analyze the risks of underusing or overusing a specific type of intelligence in managerial decision-making.

c) In your team:

1. Identify how the main characteristics of intelligence manifest in employees' work behavior:
   - problem-solving in new situations;
   - speed, flexibility, and adaptability in decision-making;
   - ability to learn and apply new concepts;
   - efficiency in handling unexpected production issues;
   - motivation for continuous improvement.
2. Provide concrete examples from the manufacturing context (e.g., handling equipment breakdowns, adapting production schedules, improving workflow efficiency).
3. Explain how these characteristics influence productivity and organizational stability.

Case Study. In daily operations of the company mentioned above, the following situations occur:

- A highly analytical employee prefers detailed data analysis

before making decisions, slowing down urgent production interventions.

- A creative employee proposes innovative solutions that are difficult to implement within existing production constraints.
- A practical employee prioritizes quick fixes, sometimes overlooking long-term consequences.
- An emotionally intelligent employee helps manage team tensions but is sometimes perceived as less decisive.

Tasks:

a) Explain the relationship between intelligence and personality in these situations.

b) Identify how personality traits influence the expression of different types of intelligence.

c) Propose managerial interventions to balance cognitive diversity and personality differences.

Case Study. As a manager of the company mentioned above, you must independently design a strategy to optimize intellectual resources. Your strategy should include:

- Methods for identifying employees' dominant types of intelligence (observation, performance analysis, task rotation);
- Principles for assigning tasks based on cognitive strengths (analytical, practical, creative, social);
- Strategies for integrating different types of intelligence in team decision-making;
- Tools for improving problem-solving efficiency (structured meetings, scenario analysis, cross-functional collaboration);
- Methods for encouraging continuous learning and cognitive development;
- Indicators for measuring improvement (error reduction, decision speed, innovation rate, productivity growth).

SELF-EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. Define the concept of intelligence.
2. What operations and abilities does intelligence include?
3. Elucidate the essence of the intelligence quotient.
4. Describe the types of intelligence.
5. What are the peculiarities of verbal, mechanical, and social intelligence?
6. Distinguish between theoretical and practical intelligence.
7. Distinguish between subjective and objective intelligence.
8. Elucidate the basic characteristics of intelligence.
9. How is the relationship between intelligence and personality manifested?
10. How can the relationship between intelligence and personality be utilized in practical activities?

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5. CREATIVITY IN MANAGERIAL ACTIVITY

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of creativity, its characteristics/qualities. 2. Psychological perspectives on approaching creativity. 3. Levels and phases of creativity. 4. Factors that stimulate and inhibit creativity. 5. Barriers and obstacles to creativity. 6. Psychosocial competences of the creative manager	- defines creativity; - describes creativity from a psychological perspective; - characterizes the levels and phases of creativity; - describes the positive and negative influences of different factors on creativity; - distinguishes and analyzes the barriers and obstacles to creativity; - proposes ways to remove barriers to creativity; - elucidates the psychosocial competencies of the creative manager.	The graduate autonomously develops and applies scenarios for optimal utilization of the creative potential of the staff.

Terms of Reference

• *Creativity* – the aptitude or ability to produce something new and valuable;

• *Creative Potential* – the totality of qualities of creativity: usefulness, productivity, efficiency, value, ingenuity, originality;

• *Creative Process* – the successive realization of the phases of creativity;

• *Creative Product* – the result of the creative process;

• *Barriers to Creativity* – any internal or external factor that hinders the free expression of ideas, original thinking, or the finding of new solutions.

5.1. The Concept of Creativity: Characteristics/Qualities

It is considered that the term "creativity" was introduced by G.W. Allport in 1938, following the understanding that the psychological basis of creation cannot be reduced to abilities alone and involves a general disposition of the personality toward novelty, as well as a particular organization of psychological processes within the personality system (Jelescu, 2012).

Currently, there are hundreds of ways in which creativity is defined. Psychologists generally agree that to be creative means to create something new, original, and appropriate to reality. To create means: to bring into existence, to bring to life, to cause, to generate, to produce, to be the first to interpret and give life to a character, to compose quickly, to conceive, to craft. A creative person is characterized by originality and expressiveness, is imaginative, generative, a trailblazer, inventive, innovative, etc.

According to some authors, "creativity is the aptitude or ability to produce something new and valuable," while others see it as "a process through which a product is realized.". Popescu-Neveanu (1978) stated that "creativity involves a general disposition of the personality towards novelty, a certain organization of psychic processes in a personality system." The defining characteristics of creativity are the novelty and originality of responses, ideas, solutions, and behaviors (Jelescu, 2012).

Between the concepts of creativity and talent, the common feature is originality. Talent corresponds to a higher level of creativity.

Creativity is characterized by several interrelated qualities: productivity, usefulness, efficiency, value, ingenuity, and originality.

Productivity refers to an individual's capacity to generate a large number of ideas, solutions, or alternatives when facing a problem or challenge. A creative person does not stop at the first possible solution but continuously explores different options and perspectives.

In managerial activity, productivity is demonstrated by a manager's ability to produce multiple ideas for improving organizational performance.

Example: A company's sales have declined significantly. Instead of relying on a single solution, the manager proposes several alternatives, such as launching a digital marketing campaign, introducing new products, expanding into new markets, improving customer service, and developing strategic partnerships. By generating numerous possibilities, the manager increases the likelihood of identifying the most effective solution.

Usefulness refers to the practical value of creative ideas and their contribution to achieving organizational goals. Creativity is meaningful only if the resulting ideas can be applied and produce beneficial outcomes.

In management, an idea may be original and interesting, but if it cannot solve a problem or improve organizational performance, it has limited practical value.

Example: A manager develops an online employee training platform that allows staff members to access training materials remotely and at their own pace. The idea is useful because it improves learning opportunities, reduces training costs, and increases employee flexibility and productivity.

Efficiency emphasizes the economic aspect of creative performance. Creative solutions should enable organizations to achieve better results while using fewer resources, less time, or lower costs.

In managerial activity, creativity often manifests itself through finding more efficient ways of organizing work and allocating resources.

Example: A manager introduces an automated reporting system that replaces manual data collection and report preparation. As a result, employees spend less time on administrative tasks and can focus on activities that generate greater value for the organization. The creative solution increases productivity while reducing operational costs.

Value refers to the theoretical or practical significance of creative products and their recognition by others. A creative idea becomes valuable when it contributes to organizational development and is appreciated by employees, customers, or society.

In management, valuable ideas often generate long-term improvements and create competitive advantages.

Example: A manager designs a mentorship program that pairs experienced employees with newly hired staff. The program facilitates knowledge transfer, accelerates employee integration, and strengthens organizational culture. Over time, the initiative is recognized as a valuable practice and becomes a permanent component of the company's human resource strategy.

Ingenuity involves finding elegant, intelligent, and highly effective ways of solving problems. An ingenious solution is often simple, practical, and capable of producing significant results.

In managerial activity, ingenuity is especially important when managers face unexpected challenges and limited resources.

Example: Due to budget constraints, a manager cannot hire additional employees to handle increased demand. Instead, the manager reorganizes work schedules, creates cross-functional teams, and introduces task rotation. These measures enable the company to meet customer needs without increasing labor costs. The solution demonstrates ingenuity because it effectively addresses the problem using existing resources.

Originality refers to the uniqueness and rarity of ideas, solutions, or products. It reflects the ability to think differently and to propose innovative approaches that deviate from conventional practices.

Originality is particularly important in dynamic business environments where organizations must continuously adapt and differentiate themselves from competitors.

Example: To improve employee engagement, a manager replaces traditional annual performance evaluations with a continuous feedback system based on monthly development discussions

and peer recognition. The approach differs from conventional performance management practices and creates a more collaborative and motivating work environment.

5.2. Psychological Perspectives on Approaching Creativity

Creativity is commonly analyzed from five complementary perspectives: as potential, as process, as product, as environment, and as a form of psychotherapy—often referred to as the "5 Ps" model of creativity. This framework highlights the multidimensional nature of creativity and the fact that it cannot be reduced to a single factor.

Creative Potential

Creative potential refers to the individual capacities and dispositions that make creative behavior possible. These include originality, flexibility, fluency of ideas, efficiency in problem solving, usefulness of outcomes, and the ability to generate novel and meaningful connections between concepts. In this sense, creative potential represents a set of latent abilities that can be developed and expressed under favorable conditions.

Creative Process

From the perspective of the process, creativity involves reorganizing and combining existing elements in a novel, original, and unpredictable way. These elements may include concepts, words, images, objects, their attributes, or various representations and processes. The creative process is generally described as a sequence of cognitive and behavioral stages through which new ideas emerge. The most widely accepted model includes four main phases: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. During preparation, the individual gathers information and defines the problem. Incubation involves subconscious processing and temporary withdrawal from the problem. Illumination is the moment of insight or the "aha" experience, while verification consists of evaluating,

refining, and implementing the generated idea. These stages are not always linear and may overlap in practice.

Creative Product

Creativity ultimately becomes visible through its outcomes. A creative product may take various forms – an idea, a theory, a work of art, a technological innovation, or a practical solution to a problem. For a product to be considered truly creative, it must demonstrate at least three essential characteristics: novelty, originality, and usefulness or appropriateness within a given context. Without these criteria, a product cannot be distinguished from routine or imitative production.

Environment

The environmental perspective emphasizes the role of both internal and external conditions in shaping creative expression. Internally, individuals may experience an intrinsic drive to develop and express their creative potential, often linked to personal growth and self-actualization. Externally, creativity is influenced by social, cultural, and organizational contexts that can either support or inhibit creative performance. A stimulating environment, characterized by openness, autonomy, and encouragement of risk-taking, tends to foster creativity, whereas rigid or overly controlled environments may suppress it.

Psychotherapy through Creativity

Recent research in psychology has also explored the therapeutic value of creative activity. Engagement in creative processes, either individually or within group settings, can have a positive impact on emotional well-being and psychological balance. Creative expression may help reduce internal inhibitions, increase self-awareness, and facilitate emotional release. In group contexts, shared creative activities often enhance communication, social interaction, and personal insight. As a result, creativity is increasingly recognized not only as a cognitive ability but also as a tool for psychological development and therapy.

5.3. Levels and Phases of Creativity

As a general human trait, creativity appears in various forms and at different hierarchical levels. American scholar C. W. Taylor identified five levels of creativity (Ețco et al., 2006), emphasizing that creative expression evolves from simple spontaneous activity to highly transformative intellectual achievements:

– Expressive creativity;
– Productive creativity;
– Inventive creativity;
– Innovative creativity;
– Emergent creativity.

a) ***Expressive Creativity*** – manifests in a free, spontaneous, and often unstructured manner, particularly in early childhood activities such as drawings, play, or simple constructions. At this stage, the emphasis is not placed on originality or usefulness, but on self-expression. Despite its simplicity, this level is fundamental, as it lays the groundwork for the later development of more complex creative abilities by encouraging imagination and exploration.

b) ***Productive Creativity*** – refers to the ability to create functional and socially useful products, often within established frameworks or traditional methods. It is commonly observed in routine occupational activities, where individuals apply learned techniques with limited personal innovation. For instance, a craftsman or weaver may produce high-quality work by following established patterns, with creativity expressed mainly through precision and consistency rather than originality. This level characterizes a large proportion of professional activity in society.

c) ***Inventive Creativity*** – involves the generation of new solutions, methods, or devices that improve or modify existing systems. Individuals operating at this level are typically inventors who introduce partial innovations, enhancing the efficiency or functionality of tools and processes. Such creativity is often associated with technical and scientific progress, as illustrated by the large number of

patents registered annually in technologically advanced countries such as Japan.

d) ***Innovative Creativity*** – is characterized by significant and systematic changes that affect the fundamental principles of a field. It goes beyond improvement and involves rethinking existing paradigms. Individuals at this level are often recognized as highly gifted or talented, and their contributions are acknowledged at a national or international level due to their originality and impact on the development of their domain.

e) ***Emergent Creativity*** – represents the highest level of creative achievement and is typically associated with genius-level contributions. At this stage, individuals produce groundbreaking ideas that redefine entire disciplines and have long-lasting historical significance. Examples include Darwin's theory of evolution and Einstein's theory of relativity, both of which fundamentally transformed scientific understanding and continue to influence contemporary thought.

English psychologist G. Wallas defined four phases of the creative process (Ețco et al., 2006), presenting creativity as a dynamic sequence of cognitive stages:

1. Preparation Stage – represents the initial and essential phase of the creative process, involving sustained conscious effort. During this stage, the individual defines the problem or goal, collects relevant information, engages in reading and observation, formulates hypotheses, and develops preliminary strategies. This phase may also be accompanied by emotional tension, frustration, or cognitive overload, especially when the problem is complex or persistent.

2. Incubation Stage – is a less visible and often subconscious phase that may extend over long periods of time. During incubation, the individual temporarily disengages from active problem-solving, while cognitive processes continue to operate implicitly, allowing ideas to reorganize and new associations to form.

3. Illumination Stage – commonly known as the "aha" or insight moment, represents the sudden emergence of a viable solution or idea. This stage marks a peak in the creative process, although the resulting insight may sometimes differ from the originally intended direction of thinking.

4. Verification Stage – is the final and critical phase in which the proposed solution is tested, evaluated, and refined. It involves logical analysis, experimentation, and possible revision of the initial idea in order to ensure its validity, coherence, and practical applicability.

Beyond hierarchical levels and process models, creativity is also widely analyzed through cognitive, social, and motivational perspectives, which help to explain why and how creative behavior emerges in different individuals.

From a *cognitive perspective*, creativity is strongly linked to divergent thinking—the ability to generate multiple, varied, and original solutions to a given problem. Unlike convergent thinking, which focuses on finding a single correct answer, divergent thinking encourages flexibility, fluency of ideas, and the ability to make remote associations between concepts. This cognitive flexibility is considered a core component of creative potential and is often assessed in psychological research through tasks that require brainstorming or alternative uses of common objects.

From a *motivational standpoint*, creativity is closely associated with intrinsic motivation. Individuals are more likely to engage in creative activities when they are driven by curiosity, interest, and personal satisfaction rather than external rewards. According to contemporary psychological theories, intrinsic motivation enhances persistence in problem-solving and supports deeper cognitive engagement, both of which are essential for creative performance.

The *social and cultural context* also plays a crucial role in shaping creativity. Creativity does not occur in isolation; it is influenced by educational systems, cultural values, and social expectations.

Environments that encourage autonomy, experimentation, and tolerance for failure tend to foster higher levels of creative expression. In contrast, rigid or overly standardized systems may limit originality by discouraging risk-taking and independent thinking.

Another important dimension is the distinction between *everyday (little-c) creativity and eminent (Big-C) creativity*. Everyday creativity refers to the creative problem-solving skills used in daily life, such as finding new ways to organize tasks or solve practical issues. Eminent creativity, on the other hand, refers to groundbreaking contributions that transform entire domains and are historically recognized. This distinction highlights that creativity is not limited to exceptional individuals but is a universal human capacity expressed at different intensities.

5.4. Factors That Stimulate and Inhibit Creativity

Creativity is a complex phenomenon with a multidimensional informational structure, influenced by a wide range of internal and external factors. These determinants can be grouped into two broad categories: ***stimulative (facilitating) factors***, which support and enhance creative expression, and ***inhibitive (restrictive) factors***, which limit or block creative potential.

I. *Stimulative Factors (Social Category)*

Stimulative factors represent all conditions and influences that encourage the development and expression of creativity. These factors operate at three interconnected levels: individual, collective, and societal.

a) Internal (individual) factors

Internal factors refer to the psychological and cognitive resources of the individual that directly support creative performance.

- *Intellectual Factors* include imagination, divergent and flexible thinking, the ability to elaborate and refine ideas, sensitivity to

problems, cognitive fluency, intelligence, memory capacity, and the use of effective problem-solving strategies. These processes allow individuals to generate multiple solutions, identify novel associations, and restructure information in innovative ways.

- *Special Aptitudes* refer to domain-specific abilities that facilitate creative achievement in particular fields. These may include academic aptitude, scientific reasoning, artistic expression, technical skills, leadership abilities, pedagogical competence, social intelligence, or even practical skills such as culinary creativity. Each of these aptitudes contributes to creativity within its respective domain.
- *Personality Traits* play a crucial role in sustaining creative effort over time. Characteristics such as strong willpower, perseverance, curiosity, openness to experience, desire for novelty, self-confidence, emotional richness, and nonconformist attitudes contribute significantly to creative productivity. Individuals with diverse interests and a willingness to challenge norms are more likely to engage in innovative thinking.

b) External (collective) Factors

External factors refer to the immediate social and organizational environment in which creativity develops.

- A *Creative Climate* is essential for stimulating innovation. This includes the structure and functioning of an organization, the quality of group interactions, communication patterns, and the general atmosphere of collaboration or competition. Environments that encourage freedom of expression, tolerance for mistakes, and open exchange of ideas tend to foster higher levels of creativity.
- *Leadership Style* also plays a decisive role. Leaders who support autonomy, encourage experimentation, and value originality contribute to the development of creative behavior within groups. Conversely, authoritarian or rigid leadership can suppress initiative and reduce creative output.

c) Social (Societal) Factors

At a broader level, creativity is shaped by the characteristics of the society in which individuals live and develop.

1. *Promoted Values* – Societies that value innovation, originality, and critical thinking tend to produce higher levels of creative achievement.

2. *Material and Institutional Conditions* – Economic resources, technological infrastructure, legislation, and governance systems influence access to opportunities for creative development.

3. *Education System* – Family upbringing, school environment, and both formal and informal educational experiences play a central role in developing creative potential from an early age.

4. *Cultural Level* – The quantity and quality of available information, as well as exposure to cultural diversity, significantly affect the richness of creative ideas.

5. *Psychological and Personal Security* – A stable and secure environment allows individuals to take intellectual risks without fear of punishment or social exclusion.

6. *Social Necessity* – Real societal needs often stimulate creativity by requiring innovative solutions to concrete problems, thereby motivating individuals to search for new approaches.

II. *Inhibitive Factors (Special Category)*

Inhibitive factors represent all internal and external obstacles that restrict or block creative thinking and expression. These factors can operate at cognitive, informational, behavioral, emotional, and personality levels.

a) Cognitive-Perceptual Factors

These factors affect how individuals perceive and interpret problems.

- Difficulty in clearly formulating or defining a problem limits the ability to find appropriate solutions.
- Inability to distinguish between cause and effect leads to logical errors in reasoning.
- Reduced perceptual sensitivity may prevent the individual from noticing important details during observation.
- Extreme cognitive styles, whether overly empirical or excessively theoretical, can restrict flexible thinking and limit alternative interpretations.

b) Cognitive-Informational Factors

These refer to limitations in knowledge and problem-solving resources.

- Lack of relevant information, experience, or methodological tools reduces the capacity to generate effective solutions.
- Absence of structured creative techniques or strategies may result in stagnation.
- Cognitive blockages, such as mental fixation or rigid mental schemas, can prevent idea generation.

c) Thinking Style-Related Factors

These factors concern habitual ways of thinking that may hinder flexibility.

- Overreliance on fixed methods and established routines leads to intellectual rigidity.
- Inability to adopt divergent thinking restricts the generation of multiple solutions.
- Self-imposed cognitive constraints limit the exploration of alternative ideas.
- Intellectual conformism discourages originality and promotes imitation rather than innovation.

d) Personality-Related Factors

Certain personality dynamics may negatively influence creative behavior.

- Excessive or insufficient motivation can reduce efficiency in creative tasks. Overmotivation may lead to pressure and anxiety, while under-motivation results in lack of engagement.

e) Temperamental and Character Traits

Stable personality characteristics may also act as barriers to creativity.

- Low self-confidence and frequent discouragement reduce willingness to explore new ideas.
- Behavioral conformity leads individuals to avoid originality in favor of social acceptance.
- Overdependence on others' expertise limits independent thinking.

• Narrow interests restrict exposure to diverse domains of knowledge.

• Lack of perseverance and weak willpower reduce the ability to sustain effort in complex creative tasks.

f) Emotional Factors

Emotions have a powerful influence on creative expression, especially when negative.

• Shyness and social inhibition may prevent individuals from expressing unconventional ideas.

• Internal or external conflicts and unresolved frustrations can disrupt cognitive focus.

• Fear of ridicule, criticism, or disapproval from peers, superiors, or subordinates significantly reduces risk-taking in thinking.

• Inability to take intellectual risks leads to avoidance of novel or uncertain solutions, thereby limiting innovation.

5.5. Barriers and Obstacles to Creativity

A *creativity barrier* represents any internal or external factor that restricts the generation of new ideas, reduces flexibility in thinking, and limits the capacity of individuals or groups to find innovative solutions in organizational contexts. In management, these barriers affect decision-making, innovation processes, and organizational adaptability.

1. Socio-cultural Context Barriers

These barriers originate from the organizational culture and broader social environment. They reflect shared norms, values, and expectations that define "acceptable" behavior and often discourage deviation from established practices. Their essence is *conformity pressure and cultural rigidity*, which limit originality.

In many organizations, employees internalize norms that define what is "appropriate" or "realistic." When these norms are too rigid, they discourage experimentation and reinforce imitation

rather than innovation. Cultural diversity or unresolved organizational tensions may further reduce openness to new ideas.

Examples:

- A company discourages new working methods because "this is how things have always been done."
- Employees avoid suggesting radical ideas due to fear of violating organizational norms.
- A multinational applies identical strategies across all branches, ignoring local innovation opportunities.

2. Endemic Fears

These barriers are rooted in emotional insecurity and risk aversion. Their essence is *fear of negative consequences (failure, criticism, rejection, or conflict)*, which suppresses initiative and experimentation.

Creativity requires risk-taking and tolerance for uncertainty. When individuals fear punishment, embarrassment, or failure, they tend to avoid proposing new ideas and prefer safe, conventional solutions.

Examples:

- Employees avoid presenting innovative proposals during meetings due to fear of criticism from superiors.
- Managers refuse to implement new digital tools because they fear project failure.
- Team members remain silent in discussions to avoid conflict with colleagues.

3. Individualist Attitudes

These barriers stem from personality traits and self-perception. Their essence is ego-centered thinking or lack of self-awareness**,** which reduces openness to collaboration and external input.

When individuals rely excessively on their own perspective or underestimate their abilities, they either reject external ideas or fail to contribute at all. Both extremes—overconfidence and low self-confidence—can block creativity.

Examples:

- A manager rejects team suggestions because they believe only their ideas are valid.
- An employee avoids participating in innovation sessions due to feelings of incompetence.
- Decisions are made subjectively based on personal preferences rather than data or collaboration.

4. Individual–Group Relations Barriers

These barriers arise from dysfunctional communication and weak collaboration within teams. Their essence is fragmentation of information and lack of collective synergy**.**

Creativity in organizations depends on knowledge sharing and interaction. When communication is poor or groups are isolated, ideas remain fragmented and fail to develop into innovative solutions.

Examples:

- Departments (e.g., marketing and production) do not communicate effectively, leading to inconsistent strategies.
- Junior employees are excluded from strategic discussions, losing valuable insights.
- Teams work in isolation without sharing knowledge across the organization.

The creativity barriers are also classified into three major categories: *emotional, cultural, and perceptual.* Each category affects a different stage of the creative thinking process.

1. Emotional Blockages

Emotional blockages are based on psychological fear and lack of confidence. Their essence is avoidance of risk and emotional discomfort associated with uncertainty**.**

Creativity requires experimentation, but emotional insecurity leads individuals to stop early, avoid challenges, or rely excessively on external validation.

Examples:

- A project manager avoids proposing innovative strategies due to fear of project failure.
- Teams stop at the first viable solution instead of exploring alternatives.
- Employees depend on managerial approval before expressing ideas.

2. Cultural Barriers

Cultural barriers arise from shared beliefs, organizational norms, and social conditioning. Their essence is conformity to established patterns of thinking and decision-making**.**

Organizations often reward efficiency and predictability more than originality. This creates a mindset where deviation from norms is discouraged.

Examples:

- Employees copy existing business models instead of proposing new ones.
- Past success is used as the main justification for current decisions, limiting innovation.
- Innovation projects are rejected because they do not fit established KPI structures.

3. Perceptual Barriers

Perceptual barriers relate to how individuals interpret and structure problems. Their essence is distorted or limited perception of reality, which leads to incorrect problem framing.

If a problem is poorly defined or misunderstood, any solution generated will also be ineffective. Creativity depends on the ability to see relationships, patterns, and hidden connections.

Examples:

- A company treats low sales only as a marketing issue, ignoring product quality or pricing.
- Managers confuse symptoms (employee turnover) with root causes (poor leadership).

• Decision-makers focus only on cost reduction instead of exploring new market opportunities.

It is very important to learn how to detect the nature of these barriers in order to foster innovative spirit in groups and organizations.

5.6. Psychosocial Competencies of the Creative Manager

At the current stage of economic development, companies in the Republic of Moldova are facing increasingly intense competition, rapid digitalization, and fast-changing consumer behavior. In this context, the emergence and integration of creative managers becomes a strategic necessity rather than an option.

Creative managers help overcome traditional management approaches by generating innovative solutions, adapting quickly to change, and identifying new market opportunities. They combine analytical thinking with creative thinking, supporting the development of competitive products and services, as well as improving communication with customers.

For Moldovan companies, especially those undergoing modernization and internationalization, these professionals can play an essential role in increasing brand visibility, streamlining internal processes, and fostering an organizational culture oriented toward innovation. In a transition economy, the creative manager becomes a key factor in adaptability and long-term performance.

Considering the results of practical investigations alongside specialized literature, a set of psychosocial competencies has been identified as fundamental to the profile of a creative and inventive manager. These competencies represent a combination of interpersonal, intrapersonal, and cognitive abilities that enable effective leadership, innovation, and adaptive decision-making within organizational contexts.

1. Communication Competence

Communication competence refers to the ability to clearly transmit, receive, and interpret information in both formal and informal organizational contexts. It includes active listening, clarity of expression, feedback delivery, and adaptation of messages to different audiences.

Example: A manager who can explain strategic changes clearly to employees reduces resistance and increases engagement in innovation processes.

2. Sociability

Sociability represents the ease with which a manager builds and maintains social relationships within the organization and beyond. It reflects openness, friendliness, and the ability to integrate into diverse professional groups.

Example: A sociable manager is more effective in networking with stakeholders, partners, and cross-departmental teams, facilitating collaboration and idea exchange.

3. Competence in Relationships and Public Relations

This competence involves managing both internal organizational relationships and external communication with clients, partners, and the public. It requires diplomacy, organizational representation skills, and the ability to maintain a positive image of the institution.

Example: A manager who successfully represents the company at conferences can attract partnerships and stimulate innovative collaborations.

4. Empathic Capacity

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and needs of others. In management, it contributes to better team cohesion and improved decision-making.

Example: An empathetic manager recognizes employee frustration during restructuring and adjusts communication strategies to reduce anxiety and resistance.

5. Prosocial skills and attitudes

Prosocial behavior refers to actions oriented toward supporting, helping, and cooperating with others. It includes fairness, altruism, and responsibility toward the group.

Example: A manager who encourages collaboration rather than competition fosters a culture of collective problem-solving and innovation.

6. Assertiveness

Assertiveness is the ability to express one's ideas, decisions, and needs clearly and confidently, without aggression or passivity. It is essential for leadership effectiveness.

Example: An assertive manager can defend an innovative project proposal in front of senior leadership while respecting alternative viewpoints.

7. Conflict Management and Resolution Skills

These skills involve identifying, addressing, and resolving interpersonal or organizational conflicts in a constructive manner. They require negotiation, mediation, and emotional control.

Example: When two departments disagree on resource allocation, a creative manager mediates a solution that satisfies both sides and preserves collaboration.

8. Self-Management Skills

Self-management refers to the ability to regulate one's behavior, emotions, motivation, and time in order to achieve professional goals. It also includes self-awareness and continuous self-improvement.

A key component is self-esteem management, which involves maintaining realistic confidence levels and using self-image effectively in leadership roles and interpersonal interactions.

Example: A manager with strong self-management skills remains calm under pressure and maintains a positive professional presence during crisis situations.

9. Creative Abilities

Creative abilities represent the cognitive foundation of innovative management and include:

- Fluency – ability to generate many ideas in a short time
- Flexibility – ability to shift perspectives and approaches
- Originality – production of unique and non-standard solutions
- Problem sensitivity – ability to quickly detect and define problems

These abilities are essential in managerial roles involving decision-making, strategic planning, and team leadership.

Example: A creative manager identifies inefficiencies in workflow and generates multiple alternative solutions, selecting the most effective one through analysis and experimentation.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Case Study. As a candidate for a department head position in a company, you are to include in your CV a series of psychosocial competencies that represent you as a creative/inventive person. Specify these competencies.

Case Study. "MecanoTech" is an industrial manufacturing company. Although the company is stable on the market, it has experienced a decline in innovation and competitiveness due to rigid work procedures and low employee involvement in idea generation.

From a creativity perspective, the organization faces:

- Socio-cultural barriers (rigid organizational culture);
- Endemic fears (fear of failure and criticism);
- Perceptual and cultural blocks (lack of critical thinking and innovation);
- Weak development of psychosocial competencies in management;
- Creative potential exists but is underutilized;
- Creative process is blocked mainly in preparation and incubation stages;
- Creative output (product) is minimal or absent;
- Organizational environment is not supportive of innovation.

Tasks:

a) Identify and classify at least 3 creativity barriers present in the organization.
b) Analyze which factors stimulate creativity are missing in this case.
c) Propose two solutions to remove socio-cultural barriers in the company.
d) Suggest three managerial actions based on psychosocial competencies (communication, empathy, assertiveness).
e) Explain which stage of the creative process is most affected and why.
f) Design a short action plan (5–7 steps) for improving innovation in the company.

Case Study. "ServiPro Solutions" is a service company offering administrative and consultancy services. Despite market digitalization, the company still relies on traditional, paper-based workflows and shows resistance to innovation.

The company is affected by:

- Emotional barriers (fear of technology and failure)
- Cultural barriers (organizational conformity)
- Perceptual blocks (misunderstanding digital transformation)
- Lack of initiative and collaboration
- Creative potential exists but remains latent
- Creative process is blocked at early stages
- No tangible creative products (no innovation implemented)
- Low organizational openness to change

Tasks:

a) Explain the role of creativity in organizational digital transformation.
b) Identify and classify emotional, cultural, and perceptual barriers in the case.
c) Describe how endemic fears affect employee behavior in this company.

d) Propose strategies to stimulate divergent thinking among employees.
e) Suggest managerial interventions to reduce resistance to change.
f) Identify which psychosocial competencies of the creative manager are most needed here and justify your answer.
g) Design a digital transformation plan (minimum 5 actions) using creativity principles.

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define the concept of creativity.
2. Explain the qualities of creativity.
3. Explain the essence of the 5 Ps of creativity.
4. Characterize the levels of creativity.
5. Characterize the phases of the creative process.
6. Identify the factors that stimulate creativity.
7. Identify the factors that inhibit creativity.
8. What constitutes a barrier to creativity?
9. Describe the barriers to creativity.
10. List the psychosocial competencies fundamental to the profile of a creative/inventive manager.

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6. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF WORKGROUP MANAGEMENT

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of work group. 2. Psychological intervention tools in the work group evolution process 3. The social-psychological climate of the work group and its monitoring.	- defines the work group, the social-psychological climate of the work group; - distinguishes and characterizes the stages in the evolution of the work group; - identifies and characterizes the psychological instruments of intervention at various stages in the evolution of the work group; - argues the significance of the social-psychological climate of the work group; - applies diagnostic tools for the social-psychological climate of the work group; - proposes solutions to improve the social-psychological climate of the work group.	The graduate autonomously monitors the evolution of the work group and carries out interventions by applying social-psychological tools.

Terms of Reference:

- *Work Group* – a form of organizing activity within a small team of people who collaborate to achieve common objectives.
- *Formal Groups* – groups that are created and exist only within officially recognized organizations.
- *Informal Groups* – groups formed based on members' personal interests (which often relate to their social and psychological characteristics).
- *Socio-Psychological Climate of the Group* – the degree of individual and group comfort, influenced by the physical and social environment, which in turn affects the quality of individual and group activity.

6.1. The Concept of Work Group

A group consists of two or more people who interact interdependently to achieve a common goal.

A group also refers to a community of people whose members share common interests and maintain direct contact with one another.

Sociologists use the term "group" in the sense of "social group" and social formation. Within social formations, we distinguish social groups, collectives, and organizations, each being part of a broader society (an encompassing social formation) (Rada and Peltea, 2014).

The concept of the ***work group*** emerged from the famous studies conducted by Elton Mayo and his team at the Western Electric plant in Hawthorne during the 1920s and 1930s. While attempting to explain a series of seemingly contradictory findings, such as increased productivity despite unfavorable working conditions, Mayo concluded that people in industrial settings naturally form groups. These groups often develop as protective mechanisms against formal organizational constraints and also serve to satisfy various social and human needs. According to Mayo, work groups, whether formal or informal, are natural groups that differ from other types of groups in terms of their origin, structure, functions, and objectives. Several decades later, Leavitt introduced the concept of the ***work team,*** emphasizing a form of organization based on cooperation and the coordinated efforts of its members to achieve common goals (Zlate, 2004).

Some researchers argue that there are no significant differences between the concepts of a work group and a work team. The only acceptable distinction lies in the contexts in which these terms are used. The term *work group* is primarily employed in psychology and originates from social psychology studies on group structure, processes, and dynamics. In contrast, the concept of a *work team*

is more commonly used in business and organizational settings. Consequently, the two terms are considered interchangeable and can be used in place of one another. Other researchers, however, seek to identify certain distinctions between work groups and work teams, arguing that a work team is more than just a group of people pursuing a common objective. Its superiority lies in the fact that individual contributions are viewed as complementary and are integrated to achieve better collective outcomes.

For most authors, a work group is a collection of two or more individuals who interact with one another while sharing tasks related to a common goal. Interaction and interdependence are what distinguish a group from a mere collection of people. A work team is also a work group; however, it represents a particular type of work group characterized by three specific properties:

1. The actions of its members are interdependent and coordinated.
2. Each member has a specific and well-defined role.
3. The team shares common goals and objectives.

Throughout these course notes, the term *work group* will be used as a generic and inclusive concept, while recognizing that a work group may develop into a *work team* when the conditions necessary for interdependence, coordination, and commitment to shared goals are present.

***Main Characteristics of a Work Group**:*

1. Common goal – members work together toward a clearly defined objective.

2. Interdependence – tasks and responsibilities are shared in such a way that individual success depends on collective effort.

3. Well-defined roles – each member has specific duties, but there is also flexibility for collaboration and mutual support.

4. Communication – essential for coordination, decision-making, and conflict resolution.

5. Coordination – usually there is a leader (formal or informal) guiding the group's activity.

6. *Variable duration* – a work group may be temporary (for a project) or permanent (departments in a company).

Work groups refer to formal groups that are created and exist only within officially recognized organizations. According to some views, work collectives represent highly developed groups that engage in activities useful to society.

Informal groups are also identified, created based on members' personal interests (which relate to their socio-psychological characteristics).

6.2. Psychological Intervention Tools in the Work Group Evolution Process

Once formed, work groups do not remain static or rigid. On the contrary, they begin to function actively, focus on achieving their goals, and engage in various activities. All these processes bring significant changes to the life of the group, expressed through slow or sudden developments, transitions from one stage of development to another, shifts from moments of calm and trust to periods of tension and suspicion, and from phases of relative stability to periods of substantial change and restructuring. In other words, the group, through its entire processual dynamic, is subject to continuous evolution, change, and transformation.

Most theories on the development of organizational groups focus on identifying a sequence of stages that groups go through from their formation to their dissolution. To explain the process of group formation, most scholarly works rely on the model developed by Bruce W. Tuckman in 1965, which was later expanded and refined (Zolta and Vancea, 2016).

Tuckman, based on a synthesis of 55 articles devoted to the evolution of small groups, proposed a model consisting of the following stages:

1. Testing and dependence;
2. Intragroup conflict;
3. Development of group cohesion;
4. Functional role relationships.

In parallel, the author highlighted the stages related to task activity, namely:

1. Task orientation;
2. Emotional response to task demands;
3. Open exchange of relevant interpretations;
4. Emergence of solutions.

The correspondence between these two realms led authors to identify the following stages in group development: forming, storming, norming, and performing. These stages have been at the center of academic debate over time, and eventually a fifth stage was also identified—adjourning (Tuchman and Jensen, 1977).

Each of the stages outlined above has distinct characteristics and requires an appropriate managerial approach. The following section provides a brief description of these stages.

I. Forming

During this initial stage, also known as the *forming* or *setting-up* stage, group members begin to orient themselves within the team and get acquainted with one another. At this point, they start to clarify the issues they will need to address, the expectations placed upon them, the structure of authority within the group, who holds decision-making power, and the overall characteristics and purpose of the team.

The forming stage is typically characterized by uncertainty, hesitation, and a certain level of stress, as individuals are still adjusting to the new working environment and to interpersonal relationships within the group. Given this adaptation process, managers should adopt a patient and supportive approach. They should allow sufficient time for informal discussions among members, as these conversations help clarify roles, expectations, and

group dynamics, and should not be dismissed as unproductive or a waste of time.

II. Storming

After the group has been formed, it enters the *storming stage*, which is characterized by tensions, conflicts, and misunderstandings, particularly in relation to the clarification and negotiation of individual roles. During this phase, the functioning of the group is frequently questioned, and a sense of cohesion is often lacking, as members may have different expectations, perspectives, and working styles.

In order to support the group's progression through this stage, managers should actively encourage open communication and create an environment in which members feel comfortable expressing criticism regarding group-related issues. It is essential that individuals are allowed to openly and honestly present their viewpoints, without fear of negative consequences. At the same time, managers should play a facilitating role in mediating differences and aligning members' perspectives, helping the group move toward shared understanding and the achievement of its objectives.

III. Norming

In the *norming stage*, group members begin to develop a clearer understanding and acceptance of their respective roles within the team. Rules and expectations become more defined and are increasingly respected, while behaviors start to align with effective teamwork practices. Conflicts that were prominent in the previous stage are gradually resolved, leading to greater harmony and cooperation among members.

The norms, values, and patterns of behavior established during this stage often extend beyond the group itself and can influence the broader organization, contributing significantly to its overall effectiveness and success. At the group level, the progress and cohesion achieved during the norming stage lay the foundation for improved coordination and higher productivity in subsequent phases.

IV. Performing

In the *performing (effectiveness) stage)*, the group reaches a high level of maturity and operational effectiveness, evolving into a truly functional team. At this point, members have developed strong interdependence, meaning that each individual's work is closely connected to and supported by the work of others. Relationships within the team are stable, mature, and grounded in mutual trust, respect, and a shared commitment to collective goals.

The group begins to function as a unified whole, operating much like a coordinated system in which individual contributions are integrated seamlessly. Daily activities are carried out in a coherent and efficient manner, and the team is capable of producing synergistic effects, where the overall performance exceeds the sum of individual efforts. Any internal competition that exists is constructive rather than disruptive, serving to stimulate performance and innovation while remaining aligned with the common objectives. Members demonstrate a high level of engagement, motivation, and responsibility toward the achievement of organizational goals.

From a managerial perspective, this stage requires a shift from direct supervision to a more facilitative and supportive role. Managers should focus on maintaining team performance rather than controlling day-to-day activities. This includes ensuring that resources are available, removing potential organizational barriers, and protecting the team from unnecessary external disruptions. At the same time, managers should reinforce positive dynamics by recognizing achievements, sustaining motivation, and encouraging continuous improvement. Leadership at this stage is largely about empowerment, trust, and strategic support, allowing the team to operate autonomously while maintaining alignment with broader organizational objectives.

IV. Adjourning

The *adjourning stage* represents the final phase in the life cycle of a group and signals the completion of its objectives and the gradual process of dissolution. This stage is typically observed in groups

that have been formed for a specific, limited duration or for the accomplishment of a clearly defined task. Once the group's mission has been fulfilled, members transition out of the collective structure as the group is formally or informally disbanded.

During this phase, group members often experience a sense of loss or disappointment, as the dissolution of the group may involve the end of meaningful professional relationships, the interruption of effective collaboration, and the disappearance of a positive or stimulating work environment. Emotional reactions such as regret, nostalgia, or uncertainty about future roles are common.

From a managerial perspective, it is important to recognize and address these emotional responses. Managers should support members during this transition by facilitating their integration into new teams or assignments that are equally engaging and motivating. This helps ensure continuity in performance and reduces the negative impact of group dissolution on individual motivation and organizational effectiveness.

In the case of stable work groups, development does not always follow a strictly linear progression toward adjourning. After the norming stage, the group may instead enter a period of decline or regression. This deterioration can be caused by various disruptive factors, such as internal or external conflicts, managerial mistakes, organizational restructuring, or changes in objectives and working conditions.

When such regression occurs, restoring the group to the norming stage requires significant and timely managerial intervention. The manager must identify and eliminate the underlying causes of dysfunction, re-establish clear communication and trust among members, and rebuild cohesion within the group. Only through consistent and targeted efforts can the group regain its stability and return to an effective level of functioning.

In order for work groups to function effectively and succeed within organizations, their managers must ensure compliance with a few basic requirements:

• *Positive Interaction* – good collaboration among group members facilitates the achievement of desired outcomes and brings satisfaction to everyone involved. Of course, there is room for individualists within the group, but the sense of satisfaction increases when cooperation is present.

• *Effective Presence* – a group functions well when its members have direct contact with one another. However, there are more and more situations in which members are separated by hundreds of kilometers or even reside on different continents (virtual teams).

• *Group Learning* – group members learn from one another and share their own knowledge with others.

• *Development of Skills That Ensure Normal Group Functioning* – such as communication, collaboration, and more.

Individual Roles Within the Group

When we closely observe work groups, we notice that their members have well-defined roles. This observation is also the basis for managers' efforts to identify and assign each member the appropriate role. It is often rightly said that: *"No person is perfect, but a group can be!"*

Belbin and his research team identified eight roles that individuals may adopt within a group (Belbin, 2010). Each role reflects a specific pattern of behaviour and contribution to team functioning.

• ***The Leader (Chairman)*** – a stable, dominant, and extroverted individual who is often perceived as the group leader even without formal authority. This person is responsible for coordinating group efforts and guiding them toward the achievement of objectives. The role is goal-oriented and characterised less by intellectual superiority and more by strong personal qualities such as discipline, self-control, and a constructive form of dominance rather than authoritarianism. The Chairman tends to trust others unless there is clear reason not to, carefully observes group dynamics, and quickly identifies individual strengths and weaknesses in order to allocate tasks effectively. This role ensures optimal use of human resources by defining responsibilities, filling gaps, maintaining communication,

and structuring group activity. The Leader also clarifies objectives, organizes agendas, prioritizes issues, and ensures that all viewpoints are considered before decisions are made.

• ***The Shaper*** – an impatient, dominant, and extroverted personality who drives the group forward through energy and challenge. In team dynamics, it is often argued that groups require both a "social leader" (the Chairman) and a "task-oriented leader," the latter being the Shaper. In the absence of a clearly defined Chairman, the Shaper may naturally assume leadership. This role is characterised by dynamism, impulsiveness, emotional intensity, and a strong focus on overcoming obstacles. The Shaper stimulates debate and progress, rarely holds grudges, and seeks to integrate ideas into workable solutions. They tend to contribute significantly to implementation and action, but may also experience frustration, feelings of persecution, or tension, requiring careful management.

• ***The Plant*** – a dominant, highly intelligent, and introverted individual known for generating original and unconventional ideas. The Plant is the primary source of creativity within the group, producing innovative and often radical solutions. Although others may contribute ideas, the Plant's contributions stand out for their originality and conceptual boldness. This role focuses on major problems rather than operational details. However, the Plant may be overly critical of others' ideas in order to promote their own, which can create interpersonal tension. They are sensitive to criticism and may withdraw if their ideas are rejected. As a result, they require supportive management and careful encouragement to ensure their creativity is aligned with group objectives.

• ***The Monitor Evaluator*** – a highly intelligent, introverted, and analytical member who provides objective judgment and realism. Unlike the Plant, the Monitor Evaluator is cautious in criticism and avoids proposing unrealistic solutions. This role contributes balance by carefully assessing ideas and decisions in a calm, rational manner. Although often less enthusiastic and less socially expres-

sive, their evaluative capacity is crucial for sound decision-making. They process large amounts of information and may engage in subtle competition with other strong roles such as the Shaper or Chairman. Effectiveness depends on their openness to new ideas.

• ***The Company Worker (Implementer)*** – a stable, disciplined, and compliant individual who transforms ideas and strategies into practical actions. This role focuses strongly on feasibility, structure, and execution. They are reliable, honest, and methodical, preferring stable environments and clear procedures. Similar to the Chairman in terms of discipline, they are resistant to sudden change and may struggle with flexibility. Once decisions are made, they focus on implementation and ensuring tasks are completed efficiently and systematically.

• ***The Resource Investigator*** – a stable, dominant, and extroverted team member who is highly sociable and outward-looking. They build external networks, gather information, and bring new ideas and opportunities into the group. Although they may not originate ideas themselves to the same extent as the Plant, they are skilled at identifying promising developments and opportunities. They energize the group through communication and exploration, but may lose interest in routine tasks or when working in isolation.

• ***The Team Worker*** – a cooperative, empathetic, and extroverted individual who promotes harmony and cohesion within the group. This member is highly sensitive to interpersonal dynamics, supports collaboration, and helps resolve conflicts, particularly those generated by more dominant or creative personalities such as the Shaper or the Plant. While their desire to avoid confrontation may sometimes lead to indecision, they play a crucial role in maintaining unity and preventing group breakdown.

• ***The Completer Finisher*** – a conscientious, detail-oriented member driven by a strong need for accuracy and error prevention. This role ensures that tasks are completed thoroughly, correctly, and on time. Their focus on precision and deadlines contributes significantly to group accountability and quality control. However,

excessive perfectionism may sometimes create pressure within the group or shift attention away from broader objectives.

Once these roles are identified, it becomes evident that forming a fully balanced group is a complex task. The absence of any one of the eight roles can weaken group performance, just as an overrepresentation of a single role may lead to dysfunction. For instance, a group dominated by nonconformists may generate many ideas, but fail to implement them effectively, while a group composed mainly of dominant and shaping personalities may be highly active but less balanced and therefore less effective than a well-structured team.

This raises an important question: what happens when not all eight roles are present? The general answer is that individuals tend to adopt secondary or complementary roles, effectively combining multiple functions within the group in order to compensate for missing contributions.

A closer examination of the eight roles reveals that they can be divided into two broad categories. Four roles are primarily oriented toward the external environment (Company Worker, Monitor Evaluator, Team Worker, and Completer Finisher), while the other four are more internally focused on group dynamics (Chairman, Plant, Resource Investigator, and Shaper). Research findings suggest an interesting outcome: those who appear most dominant in influencing group opinions are, paradoxically, often those whose orientation is directed toward the external environment.

6.3. The Socio-Psychological Climate of the Work Group and its Monitoring

It is well known that people's mood and psychological state directly affect work productivity not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. A favorable socio-psychological climate is a decisive factor in all areas of human activity.

Socio-Psychological Climate is regarded by most specialists as a key phenomenon in understanding the dynamics of social groups.

It is important to emphasize its synthetic nature, as it represents the outcome of a combination of internal and external factors, both objective and subjective (Stati, 2013).

The Socio-Psychological Climate is defined as the level of comfort experienced by individuals and groups, shaped by the influence of the physical and social environment, which in turn affects the quality of both individual and group activity.

The Socio-Psychological Climate has the following specific characteristics (Eţco et al., 2007, p. 197):

1. Firstly, it is one of the facets of people's daily life;
2. Secondly, it differs across different groups;
3. Thirdly, it affects members of the group in different ways;
4. And fourthly, its influence impacts people's psychological state.

The structure of the socio-psychological climate is determined by the system of relationships formed within the group among its members, which can be characterized by the following elements:

- *Social Relationships*, meaning the social nature of relationships among people, including: production, economic, political, legal, ethical, and aesthetic relations, which are closely related to the next group but encompass a broader sphere;
- *Interpersonal Relationships* (cooperation, competition, compatibility, friendship, understanding, etc.), as well as personality traits that shape communication within the group (sociability, restraint, shyness, introversion, independence, principled nature, fairness, etc.).

The Socio-Psychological Climate is formed through the process of people working together and is expressed in their behavior, voluntary and involuntary reactions to one another, and communication styles.

Forms in Which the Socio-Psychological Climate is Manifested in the Group *(Eţco et. al., 2007, p. 201-202):*

1. Level of Cooperation– reflects a rational distribution of tasks among group members, according to the technological links of the

production process. A lack of development in this area creates production and interpersonal conflicts, which represent another manifestation of the socio-psychological climate.

2. Level of Conflict Potential – depends on the degree of mutual understanding among employees regarding collaborative work. This includes the acceptance and support of other people's views and positions concerning the work, the presence of shared goals and means of achieving them, all of which align the group's efforts. Divergences hinder coordination, destabilize relationships, and distort the socio-psychological climate.

3. Group Cohesion – indicates the unity within the group and its ability to resist, if necessary, external influences. Changes in work conditions can create new problems that lead to disorganization and a deterioration of relationships, negatively impacting the climate. Group cohesion increases as psychological compatibility among members grows (attitudes, opinions, motivations, needs, interests, abilities, knowledge, experience, character, will, emotions, attitudes, etc.).

4. Predominant Forms of Communication – commands or requests, suggestions or questions, advice – reflect the specific nature of the socio-psychological climate in the group. By studying communication links, their number, direction, or content, we can get a sense of the group's actual socio-psychological climate.

5. Public Opinion– expresses the group's stance in the form of acceptance or disapproval, desire or demand toward an individual or group of people, regarding issues affecting the interests of the collective and society at large. However, public opinion does not mean smoothing over or ignoring contradictions. It is based on the group members' experience and is not just a sum of individual views. Public opinion represents the moral and psychological influence of the group on certain individuals or subgroups in situations where established norms are violated; it is also a recognition and evaluation factor for certain group members, provided these evaluations are truthful, unbiased, and fair.

The fundamental processes of group dynamics that influence the dynamics of the socio-psychological climate are (Eţco et. al., 2007, p.201-202):

- *The Process of Forming Small Groups,* including the methods of formation, mechanisms of group influence on the individual, the development of group cohesion, the acceptance by its members of the norms of group life, and the integration of the individual into the group;
- *Leadership Qualities,* meaning the expression of sympathies and antipathies in interpersonal relationships within the group, which implies the operation of mechanisms of dominance and submission, as well as different styles of influence that certain group members exert over others;
- *Management,* referring to the manifestation of official relationships within the group according to a functional hierarchy, which presupposes that the leader possesses business and personality traits that enable efficient activity in accordance with basic functions;
- *Acceptance of Group Decisions*, including methods of stimulating and activating the group's thinking capacity, ways and forms of including the individual in the process of forming group decisions, and the forms and formalization of the results of group discussions;
- *Carrying out Activities within the Group,* including the methods and ways of increasing efficiency, as well as the dependence of this efficiency on group cohesion, leadership style, decision-making characteristics, interpersonal relationships, social and work-related activism, and the developmental stages of the group.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Practical Assignment. Indicate the roles in the workgroup according to the behavioral characteristics and responsibilities described below.

Behavioral Characteristics, Responsibilities	Role
Dominant, intelligent, introverted. This person is the source of original ideas, makes suggestions, and proposals. They are called "the idea person."	
Very intelligent and introverted. Their contribution lies in measured, cool-headed analysis: they will never suggest starting a project they believe is wrong. Although more critical than creative by nature, they do not criticize for the sake of criticism. They will only do so if they notice a flaw in the action plan.	
Stable and submissive. This person is the practical organizer who turns decisions and strategies into well-defined tasks that others can carry out. They focus on what is feasible, and their major contribution is putting plans into practice.	
Oversees the team and coordinates its efforts toward achieving the set objectives. They are distinguished by their concern for the goals. They are the "social" leader of the workgroup.	
Fearful of what could go wrong. This person does not feel comfortable until they personally check every detail and ensure everything is running correctly. They are cautious and constantly concerned about the team's activities. They care about order, meeting deadlines, and adhering to the schedule.	
Impatient, dominant, extroverted. This person is the "task-oriented" leader. They are always open to discussion, trying to unite ideas and objectives into one feasible project, which they then strive to solve, often contributing more than the leader.	
Stable, dominant, extroverted. Certainly, they are the most pleasant member of the team. They are relaxed, sociable, "easy-going," and very interested in what is happening around them. This person is the one who goes "outside" and brings back information and ideas to the group.	
Decisive, extroverted, non-dominant. This person is the most sensitive team member, who understands the needs and concerns of others. They know the most about others' private lives. They are the most sociable and popular member of the team with great communication skills. They keep the team united, support others, and have a strong sense of loyalty.	

Case Study. As the manager of a department in an advertising company, you are tasked with solving a difficult problem: identifying competing companies, analyzing their strengths and weaknesses, and developing your own strategy to gain a competitive advantage.

Within the department, there are individuals with various roles: the leader, the deputy, the non-conformist, the evaluator, the worker, the investigator, the teammate, and the timid person. Identify the roles you believe will make the greatest contribution to solving the tasks and specify what specific tasks could be assigned to each.

Case Study. The company "UrbanMarket Retail" opens a new supermarket in a large city. A work group is formed, consisting of:

- 6 cashiers
- 5 sales floor assistants
- 1 shift supervisor
- 1 store manager

Group objectives:

- increase sales by 15% within 6 months
- improve customer satisfaction
- reduce customer complaints related to service quality

During the first weeks, the following issues are observed:

- conflicts between cashiers and sales floor staff regarding responsibility for assisting customers during peak hours
- unclear authority of the shift supervisor
- poor communication between work shifts
- high stress during busy periods
- differences in employee engagement (some highly involved, others avoiding extra tasks)

Managerial observations:

- decreased team morale
- emergence of interpersonal tensions
- lack of coordination in daily operations

Group evolution (after 3 months):

- informal rules and routines begin to emerge
- informal leaders appear among employees
- conflicts decrease but still occur during peak hours
- communication improves but remains inconsistent
- performance shows slight improvement

Tasks:

a) Identify and justify:
   - the stage the group is in at the beginning of the case
   - the stage the group reaches after 3 months

b) For each stage:
   - describe its main characteristics
   - identify evidence from the case

c) Evaluate the initial climate (minimum 3 characteristics)

d) Evaluate the climate after 3 months (minimum 3 characteristics)

d) Propose at least 4 psychological intervention tools, explaining:
   - the problem addressed
   - how the tool is applied
   - expected outcomes

Possible areas: communication, conflict management, role clarification, motivation, group cohesion.

e) Explain:

1. What the manager should do in:
   - the initial phase
   - the conflict phase
   - the stabilization phase

f) Justify how:
   - group autonomy is expressed
   - the manager's monitoring role is exercised

g) Develop a short action plan (5–7 points) to:
   - improve the social-psychological climate
   - increase group performance

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define the concept of a group.
2. Define the work group.
3. Elucidate the main characteristics of a work group.
4. Describe the stages in the evolution of a work group.
5. Specify the managerial intervention tools at each stage in the evolution of a work group.
6. Specify the individual roles in a work group.
7. Characterize the individual roles in a work group.
8. Define the concept of the social-psychological climate of the group.
9. Present the forms of manifestation of the socio-psychological climate in a group.
10. Describe the fundamental processes of group dynamics that influence the dynamics of the social-psychological climate.

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7. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION

Knowledge/ content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of managerial communication. The purposes and directives of managerial communication 2. Areas of managerial communication. 3. Managerial communication styles. 4. The climate of managerial communication. 5. Specific barriers to managerial communication and ways to reduce them 6. Individualizing communication 7. Rules for effective listening.	- defines communication, managerial communication, managerial communication style, managerial communication climate; - describes the goals and directives of managerial communication; - distinguishes and characterizes the areas of managerial communication; - analyzes managerial communication styles; - describes the benchmarks of the managerial communication climate; - identifies the specific barriers to managerial communication; - proposes ways and methods to remove barriers to effective communication; - elucidates ways to individualize communication; - argues the significance of respecting the rules of effective listening; - proposes ways to stimulate feedback; - proposes solutions to improve the communication climate in the work group.	The graduate autonomously establishes and maintains a favorable communication climate in the work group.

Terms of Reference:

• *Managerial Communication* – the totality of processes and techniques through which managers transmit, receive, and interpret information within an organization, with the purpose of coordinating activities, making decisions, motivating employees, and achieving organizational goals;

• *Managerial Communication Style* – the manner in which a manager communicates in a given context;

• *Communication Climate* – the way in which the relationship between the members of the organization and the organization itself is established;

• *Communication Barriers* – obstacles, blockages, or filters that usually have a detrimental effect on communication activities.

7.1. The Concept of Managerial Communication. The Purposes and Directives of Managerial Communication

In the current context of globalization, digitalization, and rapid organizational change, communication has become an essential component of managerial activity and a key factor of organizational success. Managers rely on communication to transmit information, coordinate activities, make decisions, motivate employees, and adapt to a continuously changing environment. More than a simple exchange of messages, managerial communication is a strategic process that facilitates collaboration, supports organizational objectives, and contributes to creating an efficient and positive organizational climate. Consequently, the effectiveness of managerial communication significantly influences both managerial performance and the competitiveness of modern organizations.

In a broad sense, communication is understood as "the exchange of messages between two or more people within an organization, aimed at achieving objectives," or more simply, as an "exchange of messages between a sender (S) and a receiver (R)" (Cândea R. and Cândea D., 1996).

Managerial communication refers to the totality of processes and techniques through which managers transmit, receive, and interpret information within an organization, with the purpose of coordinating activities, making decisions, motivating employees, and achieving organizational goals. Managerial communication

emerged as a management discipline from the necessity of providing managers with optimal means of interaction in order to fulfill their functions and roles. It later developed into a discipline that equips both managers and organizations with working tools. The first managerial communication courses were introduced at Harvard University, the University of Virginia Darden School, and the Dartmouth Tuck School in the USA in the 1920s. Gradually, these courses became mandatory for the education of any American manager and were later adopted in Europe as well. Effective and efficient managerial communication constitutes a factor of competitiveness and a strategic advantage for the organization.

To manage means to communicate—to transmit information, ideas, feelings, and decisions to subordinates, as well as to receive feedback in the form of reports, attitudes, and emotions. Therefore, managerial activity involves a complex and continuous communication process through which managers and their subordinates discover each other and interact: they converse, stimulate and calm one another, disagree and reach agreements, reject or accept each other in both major and routine matters concerning the socio-professional entity they belong to.

To the question "Why do we communicate within an organization?" there are many possible answers; however, several are universally accepted:

1. Management functions cannot be operationalized without communication. Processes such as setting objectives, aligning them with the organizational structure, harmonizing actions with initial goals, correcting deviations, and motivating personnel rely on the reception and transmission of messages.

2. Communication establishes and maintains relationships among employees.

3. Through feedback, communication highlights opportunities for improving both individual and overall organizational performance.

4. Being fundamental to the motivation process, communication enables the identification, understanding, and appropriate use of various needs and incentives to guide employee behavior toward performance and satisfaction.

5. It contributes to establishing correct and efficient relationships of mutual understanding and acceptance between superiors and subordinates, colleagues, and individuals both inside and outside the organization.

The particularities of managerial communication, compared to other types of communication, are determined by its purposes, objectives, roles, as well as the organizational framework, structure, and the context of the organizational culture.

In management, communication holds vital importance. Referring only to managerial decision-making, it is sufficient to emphasize that good adaptation and successful implementation of decisions are inconceivable without perfect communication between managers and executors. At the same time, managerial communication adheres to specific ethical norms reflected in the organizational culture, organizational policies, and, of course, the individual ethics of managers. The process and outcomes of managerial communication are based on specific concepts, principles, standards, and rules, taking on forms characteristic of the type of organization.

Competent management does not communicate randomly or arbitrarily, but according to a strategy regarding the communication act itself, and at the organizational level, it adopts communication strategies that support the implementation of the organization's overall strategy. All these communication behaviors of managers generate the organization's specific communication climate. The productivity, adaptability, and ultimately the success of the organization depend on this climate.

7.2. Areas of Managerial Communication

At present, the domains of managerial communication are frequently explained through the ***Johari Window*** (Johari Window Learning Guide), a model developed in the 1950s by American psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham. The model's name originates from the combination of the authors' first names and serves as a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between self-perception and the way others perceive us.

The Johari Window illustrates the extent to which information about an individual is known both to the person and to those around them. The model organizes this information into four distinct areas, each having particular implications for interpersonal relationships, communication effectiveness, and managerial performance.

The Open Area or Arena ("I know and others know")

The Arena includes information that both the individual and other people are aware of. This may involve professional competencies, attitudes, values, communication styles, emotions, interests, or observable behaviors. The larger this area becomes, the easier it is to establish relationships based on trust, openness, and collaboration.

In managerial practice, the Arena is essential for building effective teams. For example, a manager who clearly communicates organizational objectives, explains the reasons behind decisions, and openly expresses expectations regarding performance creates a transparent working environment. Likewise, employees who share their ideas, concerns, and professional aspirations contribute to strengthening cooperation within the team.

However, maintaining an excessively large Arena with every individual is neither realistic nor desirable. In newly formed teams or in relationships that are still developing, sharing too much personal information may create discomfort or lead to misunderstandings. Therefore, managers must carefully determine what information is appropriate to disclose, depending on the context and the maturity of professional relationships.

The Blind Spot ("I don't know, but others know")

The Blind Spot consists of those aspects of our behavior that are visible to others but remain unknown to ourselves. These may be minor details or more significant behavioral patterns that influence interpersonal interactions.

In managerial activity, blind spots can substantially affect leadership effectiveness. For instance, a manager may believe that they encourage participation during meetings, while employees perceive them as dominating discussions and interrupting others' contributions. Similarly, a manager may consider themselves approachable and supportive, whereas employees may experience their communication style as distant or intimidating.

The most effective method for reducing the Blind Spot is to actively seek feedback. Managers who regularly ask employees for opinions regarding their leadership style, communication methods, or decision-making processes gain valuable external perspectives. Performance evaluations, anonymous surveys, and individual discussions are practical instruments that help managers become more aware of their impact on others and improve their communication behaviors.

The Hidden Area or Facade ("I know, but others don't know")

The Hidden Area comprises information that individuals know about themselves but deliberately choose not to share with others. Certain information naturally remains private because it concerns personal matters that are irrelevant to professional relationships.

Nevertheless, people often withhold information for other reasons as well. They may believe that their opinions are unimportant, fear criticism, avoid exposing vulnerabilities, or simply prefer not to discuss personal experiences. Excessive reliance on the Facade can become an obstacle to effective communication because it limits trust and mutual understanding.

In a managerial context, this situation frequently occurs during periods of organizational change. For example, a manager may experience uncertainty regarding the implementation of a new strat-

egy but avoids discussing concerns with employees. Consequently, team members may interpret the manager's silence as indifference or lack of involvement. By communicating openly about challenges and acknowledging difficulties, managers often create an atmosphere of trust and encourage employees to participate actively in finding solutions.

Similarly, employees may possess valuable ideas for improving processes but refrain from expressing them because they fear rejection. Managers who promote an open communication climate and encourage dialogue help reduce the Hidden Area and facilitate the exchange of information.

The Unknown Area ("I don't know, and others don't know")

The Unknown Area includes aspects that are not yet recognized either by the individual or by others. This quadrant encompasses latent abilities, unexplored talents, hidden motivations, and beliefs that have never been consciously examined.

Because this area lies outside conscious awareness, it is the most difficult to identify and understand. However, new experiences, challenging situations, and unexpected events frequently reveal elements that previously remained hidden.

Managerial practice offers numerous examples of the Unknown Area. A manager who has never led an organization through a crisis may discover exceptional negotiation skills, emotional resilience, and the ability to make rapid decisions under pressure. Likewise, an employee assigned to a new project may reveal remarkable leadership qualities or innovative thinking that neither the employee nor the manager had previously recognized.

The Unknown Area also includes assumptions and beliefs that individuals accept as normal and therefore never question. Through professional development activities, coaching, mentoring, and exposure to new experiences, managers and employees can gradually discover and develop these hidden resources.

Overall, the Johari Window represents a valuable instrument for analyzing managerial communication and team dynamics.

The model demonstrates that effective communication depends on openness, feedback, and self-awareness. As the Arena expands through information sharing and constructive feedback, interpersonal relationships become stronger, misunderstandings decrease, and collaboration intensifies.

From a managerial perspective, the Johari Window is also an indicator of personal credibility and professional image. It helps managers evaluate the extent to which the image perceived by employees corresponds to the image they intend to project. Consequently, managers who encourage transparency, actively seek feedback, and facilitate open communication are more likely to build trust, increase employee engagement, and create a positive organizational climate that supports performance and long-term organizational success.

7.3. Managerial Communication Styles

The managerial communication style can be defined as the manner in which a manager communicates in a given context.

Just like the content and form of the message, the managerial communication style must be appropriate to the purpose and objectives of the communication, its recipient, the situation and context of the communication, and even the communication channel used (Cândea R. and Cândea D., 1996., p. 260).

Specialized literature offers a wide range of communication styles, from which the style most appropriate for achieving the intended goals should be selected. Figure 7.1 presents one of the most frequently used classifications of communication styles.

The ***non-assertive style*** is characterized by the tendency to hide or to flee rather than to confront others. It may manifest as follows:

- excessive politeness and conciliation;
- tendency to postpone decision-making (often to the point of being unable to make a decision);

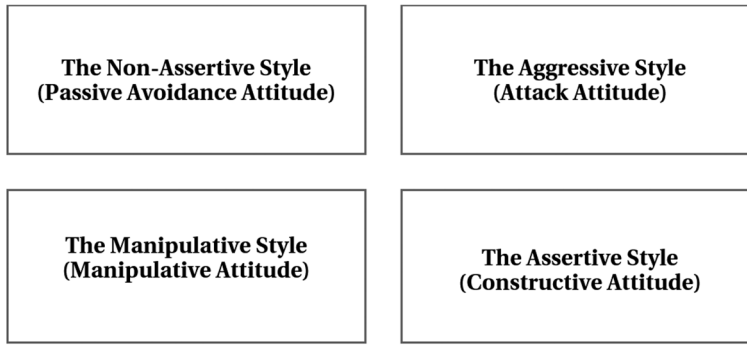


Fig. 7.1. Communication Styles

Source: Developed by the author based on (Types of Communication Styles: Complete Guide for Finance Professionals; Campli, 2017, Pipaș and Jaradat, 2010)

- pathological fear of being judged by others;
- feelings of upset or distress in case of failure.

Example: A manager avoids making a difficult decision regarding the dismissal of an underperforming employee. They postpone discussions, hoping the situation will resolve itself. In meetings, they easily accept all opinions, even if they are contradictory, out of fear of creating conflict. In the end, the team becomes confused, and performance declines due to the lack of clear direction.

The ***aggressive style*** is defined by the tendency to always be at the forefront, to have the last word, and to seek exposure at any cost, regardless of whether others are hurt or offended.

Example: A manager in a project meeting constantly imposes their point of view, interrupts colleagues, and rejects any differing opinions. For example, they unilaterally decide to change the strategy without consulting the team and publicly criticize those who disagree. In the short term, this may lead to compliance, but it creates tension and demotivation.

The ***manipulative style*** reflects an individual's preference for operating behind the scenes, with a tendency to wait for the right moment to come into the spotlight and showcase themselves.

Example: A manager does not directly express dissatisfaction with an employee but discusses the issue separately with other colleagues to influence their opinion. For example, they intentionally withhold certain "strategic" information to see who "manages" best and then promote selected individuals without transparency. Decisions appear neutral but are actually directed behind the scenes.

The ***assertive style*** expresses the ability for self-affirmation, for honest, direct, and clear expression of one's opinions and rights, without aggression and without harming others. It manifests as follows:

- the individual is able to pursue their own interests without infringing upon the needs of others;
- they know how to listen and are willing to make themselves understood;
- they rely on their own strengths to achieve their goals;
- this attitude enables the achievement of proposed objectives without generating resentment from others, and most of the time, the individual manages to earn their sympathy.

This style is the most appropriate for establishing good long-term relationships. Studies show that people who adopt an assertive communication style are more likely to achieve emotional well-being. This style allows one to argue their opinion without being aggressive and without feeling humiliated (Pipaș and Jaradat, 2010).

Example: A manager clearly and respectfully communicates that a deadline cannot be extended, explaining the reasons while listening to the team's difficulties. For example, they say: "I understand the challenges, but the delivery must remain on Friday. Let's see together how we can prioritize tasks." In this way, they maintain their position without generating conflict or resentment.

Next, the grouping of communication styles into four categories is presented: "blaming", "informing-directing", "convincing", and "problem-solving" (Cândea R. and Cândea D., 1996, pp. 260–264). According to the cited authors, the main characteristics of these communication styles are:

• The ***blaming style***, which aims to criticize, accuse, find faults, and identify a culprit. The manager adopts a judge-like or evaluator-like attitude. The manager does the talking and does not accept responses or points of view from the receiver (the subordinate). Using this style, the manager may achieve the desired effect, meaning the subordinate either temporarily changes their behavior or accepts and acknowledges the accusation;

• The ***informing-directing style***, which aims to provide explanations, instructions, and decisions. The manager prepares the message beforehand, and the subordinate must execute it. The message is clear, concise, and focused on the task the subordinate needs to accomplish;

• The ***convincing style***, which seeks to obtain agreement, acceptance of a plan, the performance of an action, or the implementation of a change. The manager dominates the communication because they are familiar with the situation and the solution. To convince the subordinate, the manager actively listens and provides feedback. If the arguments used are rational, the manager may succeed in persuading the subordinate;

• The ***problem-solving style***, which aims to solve emerging problems. It relies on supportive communication principles, and neither party dominates the communication. The communication is descriptive, fact-based, and each party expresses their opinions, even if they are contradictory.

7.4. The Climate of Managerial Communication

The way managers communicate, the organization's communication policy, the adopted strategies, and the communication behaviors of employees all have a cumulative effect, either positive or negative, the result of which is reflected in the communication climate within the organization. The communication climate, identified as the mode of correlation between the organization's mem-

bers and the organization itself, is one of the elements that define and characterize organizational culture. For a good manager, it is very important to diagnose the communication climate in their organization in order to identify negative elements and to improve performance by enhancing communication.

In any organization, different forms of communication climate exist, situated between the two extremes: defensive communication and cooperative communication. Each of these has its own characteristics and is generated by specific attitudes and behaviors of the managers.

The ***Defensive Climate*** is generated if the manager:

- maintains a constant attitude of evaluation and control;
- plans everything in advance, while trying to give the impression that others are making the decisions;
- shows disinterest in the problems or viewpoints of others;
- has an attitude of superiority based on the position they hold and the power it implies, suggesting the inferiority of others;
- ostentatiously demonstrates excessive self-confidence, but with rigidity in their own viewpoints, considering themselves entitled to win in any conflict.

For example, during a project meeting, the manager already presents a "final" decision but phrases it as "What do you think?" without actually considering responses. If someone proposes a different solution, it is quickly corrected or ignored.

In other situations, the manager constantly monitors employees' work, requests detailed reports for every step, and reacts critically to any mistake without offering real support. As a result, the team begins to avoid taking initiative out of fear of being judged.

The ***Cooperative Climate*** is generated by a manager who:

- has a descriptive attitude;
- is problem-oriented;
- expresses themselves spontaneously, with sincerity, openness towards others, and transparency in decisions;
- shows empathy, respects the values of others;

- adopts an egalitarian stance, minimizes differences in status and power, and shows respect;
- is flexible and accepts the possibility of changing their behavior or viewpoint.

For example, in a meeting about project planning, the manager presents the problem and asks for solutions from everyone, jointly analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of each proposal. The final decision is clearly explained and justified.

In daily work, the manager actively listens to employees, acknowledges when an idea does not work, and is willing to change their opinion if better arguments appear. They encourage openness, and team members feel respected and motivated to contribute.

7.5. Specific Barriers to Managerial Communication and Ways to Reduce Them

The specifics of managerial communication bring about the emergence of distinct obstacles within organizations. These obstacles are barriers, blockages, or filters that typically play a negative role in the communication process. They have two main sources: the manager (the boss) and the subordinate.

The main obstacles generated by managers are related to difficulties in transmitting information, due to the tendency to create artificial barriers in communication with others through:

- ***Insufficient Documentation*** – the idea that a boss doesn't have time has been perpetuated. This is a misconception. An effective boss always knows how to make time for the problems of subordinates. The lack of time, often cited by some bosses, is associated by subordinates with rushing through tasks, working quickly, or acting "automatically";
- ***Tendency to Over-Explain Introductory Points***, which becomes unnecessary, especially when the interlocutor is a subordinate or colleague already familiar with the topic;

- ***Tendency to Turn Dialoguei Into Monologue***, either due to lack of time, lack of trust in the partner, or lack of trust in their opinion. If you don't want to hear the other person's opinion, or if you know you won't consider it, there's no point in spending half an hour explaining what you want to do. It wastes time unnecessarily;
- ***Use of a Raised, Irritable Tone***, which can intimidate the partner. Using aggressive tactics may be beneficial if you want a docile, compliant subordinate who never questions your professional abilities. However, if you want a serious dialogue partner, you must allow your subordinate the freedom to contradict you, and you should encourage this attitude. At high management levels, there is a push for a subordinate to be negative and say "no" to all proposals from their bosses. This way, better solutions to problems can be thought through;
- ***Use of Inappropriate Language*** for the recipient of the message. Out of respect for the person you're speaking to, you must use accessible language when discussing organizational issues. Otherwise, you will block them immediately due to their lack of knowledge in the field;
- ***Deficiencies in Listening Skills***. Effective communication relies on active listening. Listening is not just about hearing but also about what you do with what you hear. Feedback is inevitably involved in this type of listening;
- ***Lack of Respect for the Interlocutor***, shown through inattentiveness, impatience, rushing to finish quickly, or solving an unrelated problem in parallel;
- ***Persistence in Prejudice*** that subordinates can't have good ideas or suggestions for solving a problem;
- ***Tendency to Intervene During Dialogue*** and present the opposite view, which discourages continued discussion;
- ***Resistance to Introducing a New Idea***, as a new idea may disturb an already established order.

All these obstacles can be easily overcome by managers through the development of effective communication skills in any circumstances, both inside and outside the organization.

Alongside obstacles generated by managers, there are also barriers created by subordinates within organizations. The motivation for these obstacles differs and is mainly linked to the sense of security and protection felt by subordinates.

The main obstacles generated by subordinates are related to:

- ***Lack of Involvement in the Life of the Organization.*** The mentality that the unit is led by the bosses and that the subordinate's role is to listen without commenting on orders is outdated and dangerous.
- ***Desire for Security,*** which involves a passive and expectant position. Especially during transition periods, or when information within the organization is scarce, there is a subjective tendency for protection, manifested by non-involvement.
- ***Subordinates' Reluctance to Express Their Opinions*** due to fear of displeasing their superiors or jeopardizing their career advancement. The rules "The boss is always right" and "When they are wrong, the first rule applies" seem to define a certain mentality in many organizations.
- ***Belief that Subordinates' Problems Do Not Concern the Boss.*** This false belief is detrimental to the smooth running of the organization. Every behavior is driven by interest, and subordinates' problems are very important to them. Therefore, they will be interested in resolving them. A boss who carefully addresses these issues will be seen with more understanding by subordinates and will have a greater influence over them.
- ***Lack of Communication Habits.*** Executive staff, lacking the ability to express themselves either in writing or orally, often refrain from initiating communication.
- ***Tendency to Consider Any Idea or Suggestion for Improvement as an Indication of a Failure Tolerated by the Management.*** Raising a problem could appear as a denunciation of the management, which could trigger hostility from their side.

7.6. Individualizing Communication

Personality factors play a crucial role in individualizing managerial communication, as each employee perceives, interprets, and reacts differently to the messages they receive. For this reason, effective managers adapt their communication style to the psychological and behavioral characteristics of their subordinates, in order to increase clarity, motivation, and performance.

Taking personality factors into account involves several key steps:

1. Identifying the Personality Type

The first step in adapting communication is recognizing the personality traits of employees. This can be achieved through multiple methods:

- *Direct observation***:** analyzing how individuals react in stressful situations, how they collaborate within teams, and how they respond to feedback or authority.
- *Informal discussions*: understanding what motivates or frustrates them, as well as their expectations and professional interests.
- *Assessment tools:* using structured instruments such as personality tests, when they are available and appropriate within the organizational context.

This stage is essential because accurate identification of personality traits allows managers to tailor communication more effectively.

2. Adapting Communication Style According to Personality Type (DISC Model)

The DISC model is a widely used framework for understanding behavioral differences in organizational settings. It categorizes individuals into four main personality types and suggests specific communication strategies for each (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1. Adapting Communication Style According to Personality Type (DISC Model)

Personality Type	Characteristics	Effective Communication Strategy
Dominant (D) – results-oriented, competitive	Focused on goals, decisive, action-driven	Be direct, concise, and focused on objectives. Avoid unnecessary details or lengthy explanations.
Influential (I) – sociable, optimistic	Expressive, enthusiastic, people-oriented	Use a positive tone, engage emotionally, and emphasize relationships and collaboration.
Stable (S) – calm, loyal, cautious	Patient, supportive, prefers stability	Provide clear instructions, allow time for decision-making, and avoid pressure or abrupt changes.
Conscientious (C) – analytical, detail-oriented	Logical, precise, quality-focused	Communicate in a structured, factual, and detailed manner. Provide data and clear justification.

Source: Developed by the author based on (Mishra, 2026).
Note: The DISC model is a behavioral assessment framework based on four primary personality types: Dominant (D), Influential (I), Stable (S), and Conscientious (C). It is widely used in leadership, coaching, human resources, and organizational communication. The model was originally introduced by psychologist William Moulton Marston in his work Emotions of Normal People *(1928). It does not measure intelligence or mental ability, but rather observable behavioral tendencies in different situations (Mishra, 2026).*

3. Considering the Personal Motivation of the Interlocutor

An important aspect of managerial communication is identifying the individual motivation of each employee. People are driven by different factors, such as:

- public recognition and appreciation;
- job security and stability;
- professional development and career advancement;
- financial rewards or autonomy.

Effective communication should therefore target the specific motivational "trigger" of each individual, increasing engagement

and performance. A message becomes significantly more effective when it is aligned with what truly motivates the receiver.

Adapting managerial communication to personality factors improves understanding, reduces conflicts, and enhances organizational efficiency. By combining personality recognition, the DISC model, and motivational analysis, managers can develop a more flexible and effective communication strategy that supports both individual and organizational goals.

7.7. Rules for Effective Listening

To communicate is not only to express one's own ideas and emotional states but also to listen to the interlocutor. Effective listening is an essential skill in managerial activity, as it directly influences the quality of decisions, workplace relationships, and organizational performance. Several important arguments support this idea:

First, effective listening helps managers correctly understand employees' problems and needs. Through active listening, misunderstandings are reduced and more complete information is obtained, leading to better-informed decisions.

Second, it contributes to building trust within the team. Employees feel valued when they are carefully listened to, which increases motivation and loyalty toward the organization.

It also helps reduce workplace conflicts. Many tensions arise from poor communication, and a manager who listens actively can identify misunderstandings early and resolve them before they escalate.

In addition, this skill encourages innovation. Employees' ideas can be valuable sources of improvement, and a manager who is open to listening creates an environment that supports creative suggestions.

Last but not least, effective listening improves team coordina-

tion and efficiency by ensuring clear communication and better alignment with organizational goals.

To communicate is not only to express one's own ideas and emotional states but also to listen to the interlocutor. How we listen to others deserves at least as much attention as how we express ourselves. Listening does not mean waiting for your turn to speak; it is not something that happens automatically or without effort. By following a few simple rules, we can significantly improve our ability to listen and understand the received messages more accurately.

Rules for Effective Listening:

1. We pay attention not only to the message but also to the sender.
2. We interrupt as little as possible.
3. We do not anticipate or jump to hasty conclusions.
4. We do not rush to intervene during every moment of silence. We wait a moment to see what follows.
5. We try to "put ourselves in the shoes" of the interlocutor (to understand their desires, motives, intentions, and reasoning).

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Case Study. During a meeting of the department members you are part of, a heated discussion arose regarding a decision about the size of the performance-based salary bonus. The manager presented their own observations on this subject, arguing that they had carefully studied all the results of the employees, their behavior, and their attitude toward tasks. Some employees tried to intervene with counterarguments but were interrupted by the manager, who stated that they knew in detail the contribution of each person. *What errors were made by the manager in managerial communication? What consequences could these errors have on the workgroup's performance and the psychological climate?*

Case Study. As a newly appointed manager of a company, you are to convene a meeting with your subordinates to present your action plan. You are relying heavily on the outcome of this meet-

ing, as you are aware that the quality of your presentation will determine the extent to which you will be supported in achieving your set objectives. Identify 3-4 communication barriers often created by managers and specify how you will avoid them in this meeting.

Case Study. TechSolutions Ltd. is an IT company with 45 employees, structured into four departments: IT Development, Human Resources, Project Management, and Finance. The company is experiencing rapid growth, which has increased workload and coordination complexity.

In recent months, several problems have been identified:

- frequent delays in project delivery;
- increasing conflicts between departments;
- weak or absent feedback processes;
- declining employee motivation;
- difficulties in interdepartmental coordination.

These issues have negatively affected client satisfaction and organizational efficiency.

Observed communication behaviors:

- *IT Manager:* makes unilateral decisions, limited team consultation, rejects alternative ideas.
- *HR Manager:* avoids conflict, delays decisions, provides minimal direct feedback.
- *Project Manager:* influences decisions indirectly through informal discussions.
- *Finance Manager:* communicates clearly, logically, and involves the team in decision-making.

The organization is characterized by:

- hierarchical communication;
- limited feedback culture;
- fear of expressing opinions;
- inconsistent managerial communication styles;
- predominance of a defensive communication climate, with minor cooperative elements.

Key communication barriers include:

- lack of structured feedback mechanisms;
- fear of negative evaluation;
- poor interdepartmental communication;
- lack of active listening;
- unclear or inconsistent communication practices;
- overload of managerial roles affecting communication quality.

Employees differ in behavior and motivation:

- some are results-oriented and independent;
- others prefer stability and clear instructions;
- some are relationship-oriented;
- others are detail-focused and analytical.

Communication is currently not adapted to these differences.

Common issues related listening and feedback include:

- interruptions during meetings;
- lack of active listening;
- selective attention depending on hierarchy;
- absence of structured feedback (positive and negative).

Tasks:

a) Identify and describe:
   - the communication style of each manager
   - the impact of these styles on employees and performance

b) Determine the type of communication climate (defensive or cooperative). Justify your answer with evidence from the case

c) Identify at least 5 communication barriers. Explain how each barrier affects organizational performance

d) Propose: at least 5 measures to improve communication and ways to strengthen feedback and reduce communication barriers

e) For different employee profiles:

- explain how communication should be adapted
- provide concrete examples of managerial messages

f) Identify listening problems in the organization. Propose rules for effective listening. Explain how improved listening would reduce conflict

g) Design a short action plan (1 month) to:
- improve communication climate
- increase feedback
- enhance interdepartmental cooperation

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define the concept of managerial communication.
2. Explain the functions of managerial communication within an organization.
3. Describe the areas of managerial communication.
4. Describe the styles of managerial communication.
5. Define the concept of communication climate.
6. Describe the types of communication climate.
7. Outline the steps in the process of individualizing communication.
8. Describe the specific barriers of managerial communication.
9. Explain how to individualize communication based on personality.
10. Present the rules for effective listening.

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8. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF WORKPLACE CONFLICTS

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of conflict. Causes and symptoms of conflicts. 2. Typology of conflicts. 3. Strategies for conflict resolution	- defines conflict; - identifies causes, symptoms, types of conflict; - distinguishes strategies and techniques for resolving labor conflicts, argues their relevance in concrete situations; - argues the impact of the quality of conflict management on the social-psychological climate of the work group.	The graduate autonomously diagnoses a labor conflict and applies appropriate strategies to resolve it.

Terms of Reference:

- *Conflict* – a tense state that arises when two or more parties within an organization must interact in order to complete a task, make a decision, achieve an objective, or solve a problem.
- *Conflict Symptom* – the visible signs or manifestations that indicate the presence of a conflict, even though the underlying issue may not always be clearly expressed or consciously recognized.
- *Conflict Resolution Strategy* – the plan or method chosen to manage and resolve a conflict.

8.1. The Concept of Conflict. Causes and Symptoms of Conflicts

As a term, *conflict* derives from the Latin "conflictus," meaning "to hold together by force," and as a phenomenon, according to the The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology, it signifies "opposition between social actors (individuals, groups, classes), caused by divergent interests and involving economic, political, cultural, or social dimensions" (Turner, 2021).

The APA Dictionary of Psychology defines conflict as "a struggle of tendencies, of interests, a situation in which an individual is subjected to opposing vector forces of nearly equal strength. the occurrence of mutually antagonistic or opposing forces, including events, behaviors, desires, attitudes, and emotions."

Conflict is a state of tension that arises when two or more parties within an organization must interact to complete a task, make a decision, achieve an objective, or solve a problem.

The essential causes of conflict are:

- Different viewpoints on priority objectives;
- Different opinions regarding the methods used;
- Differences in perception or value systems;
- Lack of communication or poor communication leading to misunderstandings;
- Competition for scarce resources;
- Differences in power, status, and culture;
- Competition for supremacy;
- Ambiguity;
- Changes in the organization's external environment;
- Aggressiveness and stubbornness, etc.

A ***Symptom of Conflict*** represents the visible signs or manifestations that indicate the existence of a conflict, even if the real underlying problem is not always clearly expressed or recognized.

Among the most relevant symptoms of a state of conflict, the following can be highlighted: violence; tension; misunderstanding; incidents; discomfort.

8.2. Typology of Conflicts

There is a great variety of causes that generate conflicts (Drăgănescu, 2009; Hinescu and Moișă, 2005), but most conflicts can be reduced to a few basic types, which can be identified using specific criteria, such as:

A. From the perspective of the effects produced on the organization in general and its performance in particular, conflict can be:

- ***Beneficial (functional or constructive)*** — arising as a confrontation of ideas between individuals or groups, leading to possible solutions for improving performance; this type of conflict prevents stagnation, eliminates tensions, and facilitates positive change in actions;
- ***Destructive (Dysfunctional)*** — referring to any confrontation or interaction between individuals or groups whose actions hinder the achievement of proposed goals; this type of conflict leads to the consumption of personal and organizational resources in a hostile environment, generating a constant state of dissatisfaction.

B. From the perspective of scope, conflicts can be:

- ***Intrapersonal Conflicts*** — occurring when there is, as noted in the specialized literature, an incompatibility or inconsistency between related cognitive elements, affecting an individual's ability to predict and self-control, ultimately causing uncertainty; in other words, it arises when an individual is unsure about what to do and what is expected of them, especially when job demands conflict with personal values, ambitions, or ideals;
- ***Interpersonal Conflicts*** — arising and escalating between two or more individuals within the same group or between different formal or informal groups; they are caused by rules, personality differences, value, interest, or attitude differences, or negative emotional states (antipathy, envy, hatred);
- ***Intergroup Conflicts*** — frequently occurring between groups with different interests and goals, usually complex due to both the causes and the effects they trigger. Robert E. Callahan and his collaborators note that such conflicts generally lead to an increase or strengthening of group cohesion and loyalty among members.

C. From the perspective of their essence, conflicts can be classified, according to specialists in human conflict, as:

- ***Substantial Conflicts*** — determined by the existence of different objectives, manifesting more intensely when individuals

pursue their own interests through the group; a specific form of this type of conflict in military structures is the generational conflict;

- ***Affective Conflicts*** — generated by emotional states affecting interpersonal relationships;
- ***Pseudo-Conflicts or Manipulation Conflicts*** — with significant weight in totalitarian and post-totalitarian societies, resulting from individuals' insincerity and duplicity.

D. Depending on the systems involved, a distinction can be made between: endogenous and exogenous conflicts, symmetrical and asymmetrical conflicts, conflicts oriented toward litigation (resolved once the problem is solved) or toward structure (e.g., socio-political revolutions), economic competition, power struggles, etc.

E. Referring to group dynamics, conflicts can be:

- ***Task-Oriented Conflicts*** — related to the substance of the activity, idea, or method;
- ***Structure-Oriented Conflicts*** — arising from leadership struggles, unequal workload distribution, and personality differences.

F. Based on the knowledge of the conflicting parties, conflict can be:

- ***Open*** — when the conflicting parties are clearly identified;
- ***Hidden*** — when the parties involved are only partially aware of each other.

G. Based on the degree of intensity, conflict can be:

- ***High*** — characterized by the escalation and amplification of interest incompatibilities;
- ***Low*** — specific to early manifestations of opposing interests, contradictory actions, etc.

H. According to duration and mode of evolution, conflict can be:

- ***Spontaneous*** — triggered by random and sudden causes;
- ***Acute*** — generated by obvious causes (with short duration but intense manifestations);
- ***Chronic*** — caused by hidden factors related to human personality (ambitions, desire for power, animosities, old disputes, etc.).

8.3. Strategies for Conflict Resolution

A ***Conflict Resolution Strategy*** represents the plan or method chosen to manage and resolve a conflict.

In order to resolve conflicts that may arise during the course of activities, one can use one of the strategies highlighted in management theory and practice, or combine various strategies (Stanciu, 2004; Hinescu and Moișă, 2005). These strategies are illustrated in Figure 8.1.



Fig. 8.1. Conflict Resolution Strategies

Source: Developed by the author based on (Sanciu, 2004; Hinescu and Moișă, 2005)

The Avoidance Strategy

This strategy is characterized by the fact that, although the conflict is recognized by the parties, they do not wish to confront each other. Opinions regarding the usefulness and relevance of this strategy vary. For example, some specialists believe that such a strategy reveals certain deficiencies within the group's functioning, namely: the conflicting parties have a reduced capacity to assert their interests; cooperation between group members is weak; the individuals involved lack confidence in their ability to manage a conflict due to the absence of necessary conflict-resolution skills. At the same time, there are views that recognize the usefulness of the avoidance strategy in the following situations:

- The stakes are not very high;
- The motives for engaging in the conflict are not strong enough;
- Maintaining an amicable relationship is a priority at that moment;
- Time constraints justify avoiding the conflict.

However, the main disadvantage of the avoidance strategy is ignoring the underlying causes of the conflict. As a result, any alleviation of tension may only be temporary, and the conflict may "erupt" again later.

Example: A project manager in an IT company notices a disagreement between two senior developers regarding the choice of software architecture. Since the project deadline is not immediately affected and both developers are highly competent, the manager decides not to intervene at that moment, postponing the discussion to a later stage when more information will be available.

The Accommodation Strategy

This is a strategy in which the conflicting parties do not insist on their own point of view or interests, but instead act to satisfy the needs of others. In other words, managers become cooperative, choosing to maintain interpersonal harmony at all costs.

This strategy is appropriate in situations such as:

- It may earn social credit for addressing more significant future problems or when the situation is already out of control;
- It demonstrates good sense when facing aggressive behavior from others;
- Maintaining favorable relationships is a priority at the moment;
- The conflict involves a subordinate–superior relationship, and accommodation is the only option;
- The outcome is not significantly important;
- Problems must be solved within a very short timeframe.

Basic disadvantages of this strategy include:

- Not defending one's own interest may be perceived as a sign of weakness and affect future interactions;
- It is only effective short-term, as people are unwilling to consistently sacrifice their interests just to maintain relationships;
- It may limit creativity and hinder the generation of new ideas and solutions.

Example: A department manager receives a proposal from a subordinate that conflicts with the manager's preferred approach. However, in order to preserve a positive working relationship and maintain team morale, the manager accepts the subordinate's proposal, even though it is not the manager's first choice.

The Competition Strategy

This strategy is completely opposite to accommodation and focuses on maximizing the imposition of one's own interests, at the expense of cooperation. It seeks personal victory and is often described as a "win-lose" approach. Here, one party disregards the effects of its actions on others, prioritizing only its own objectives.

Competition is appropriate in situations where:

- One possesses significant power and is confident in the correctness of the facts;
- The situation is truly "win-lose";
- The issues are critical, involving important values and policies, requiring firm action;
- There is strong confidence in one's own viewpoint;
- Immediate and rapid decisions are needed;
- The conflict is between a superior and subordinates;
- Maintaining a distant relationship is acceptable.

The main disadvantage of the competition strategy is the deterioration of cooperation and interpersonal relationship quality.

Example: During a crisis situation in a manufacturing plant, the operations manager identifies a safety risk in continuing production. Despite resistance from production staff concerned about

financial losses, the manager unilaterally decides to stop the production line immediately to ensure compliance with safety regulations.

The Compromise Strategy

This strategy combines cooperation and the satisfaction of others' needs with defending one's own point of view. Conflicting parties, aware of the risks of escalation, agree on a mutual compromise that ensures a small win and a limited loss for both sides.

The compromise approach is suitable when:

- The underlying issues are complex and significant;
- No other solutions are available;
- The parties have shared interests regarding the issue;
- Negotiation is appropriate;
- The parties are motivated to build a lasting relationship.

However, the main drawback of this strategy is that each side remains somewhat dissatisfied. Thus, while it can be acceptable for achieving temporary balance, it is not always advisable, particularly when conflicts stem from asymmetrical power relations and the weaker party risks being disadvantaged.

Example: Two department heads (Marketing and Sales) are in conflict over the allocation of a limited budget. After negotiation, the manager decides to split the budget between the two departments, allowing both sides to partially achieve their objectives while making concessions.

The Collaboration Strategy

This strategy seeks to maximize both the imposition of one's own interests and cooperation to satisfy others' needs. It involves finding integrative agreements that optimally address the interests of all parties.

Advantages of the collaboration strategy include:

- Maintaining interpersonal relationships while achieving goals;
- Acceptance of dialogue by all parties and viewing conflict as a challenge to be solved.

To apply this strategy, managers should embrace certain beliefs:

- Every conflict has a mutually acceptable solution;
- Differences of opinion are necessary and beneficial for creativity;
- Trust in the conflict partner is essential;
- Cooperation is preferable to competition.

The collaboration approach is particularly relevant when:

- The issues have reached a critical point;
- Maintaining a long-term relationship is crucial;
- There are no major time constraints;
- The conflict involves individuals of different hierarchical positions.

Example: A human resources manager facilitates a joint meeting between employees and senior management to address dissatisfaction with the current work schedule. Through open discussion and shared problem-solving, both sides agree on a hybrid working model that balances organizational needs with employee preferences.

Each of these strategies may be appropriate depending on the specific conflict situation. Rapid resolution of conflicts is crucial for ensuring the effectiveness of a work group.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Case Study. As the head of a department, you are tasked with resolving a conflict involving 6 members of the work group. According to other members of the group, the conflict started when the results of a professional competition were announced: one of the individuals involved believes that their ideas were "stolen" by a colleague, while the colleague asserts that they presented their own ideas. Each of the opponents is supported by two friends. Develop a strategy to resolve this conflict.

Case Study. You are part of the management team at TechSolutions Ltd., a multinational IT services company. The company is cur-

rently working on a high-priority software development project for an international client.

Within the project team, a serious conflict has emerged between two key employees:

- Alex (Senior Software Engineer) strongly supports using a traditional, stable programming framework that the team has successfully used in previous projects.
- Maria (Senior Software Engineer) insists on adopting a newer, more innovative framework that could improve performance but also introduces higher technical risks and requires additional training.

The disagreement has escalated over the past two weeks. Team meetings have become tense, communication has decreased, and deadlines are starting to be affected. Other team members are becoming divided, forming informal "support groups" around each engineer.

As the project manager, you must intervene to resolve the conflict.

Tasks:

a) As the project manager, you are required to:

1. Analyze the conflict situation
2. Select one conflict management strategy from the following:
   - Avoidance
   - Accommodation
   - Competition
   - Compromise
   - Collaboration

b) Justify your choice

c) Explain step-by-step how you would apply the chosen strategy

d) Describe the expected outcome

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Define the concept of conflict.
- What are the most common causes of workplace conflicts?
- How do we define the symptoms of a conflict?
- What are the symptoms of workplace conflicts?
- Describe the types of conflicts.
- Summarize the essence of conflict resolution strategy.
- Explain the essence and application of the following workplace conflict resolution strategies:
  - *Avoidance strategy*
  - *Accommodation strategy*
  - *Competition strategy*
  - *Compromise strategy*
  - *Collaboration strategy*

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9. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of decision. Defining decision from a psychological perspective. 2. Psychological aspects of the decision-making process.	- defines the decision, the decision-making process from a psychological perspective; - elucidates and argues the managerial actions necessary to monitor the decision-making process from a psychological perspective; - proposes actions to increase the quality of the decision-making process; - describes the psychological tools to stimulate staff creativity in the decision-making process and to form the commitment assumed for the risk; - identifies the links between participative management and the quality of the decision-making process.	The graduate autonomously applies psychological procedures to monitor the decision-making process.

Terms of Reference:

- *Decision* – the act of choosing a course of action aimed at achieving objectives while taking into account the available resources;
- *Decision-Making Process* – consists of all the phases through which the managerial decision is prepared, adopted, and evaluated;
- *Psycho-Individual Factors* – include the personal psychological characteristics of an individual: individual psychological aspects, personality traits, personality type, etc.;
- *Psychosocial Factors* – refer to aspects related to role, type of interaction and discussion within the decision-making group, group phenomena and behaviors;

• *Psycho-Organizational Factors* – encompass the type of organization, the organization's structure, and the specifics of the leader's activity from a psychological perspective.

9.1. The Concept of Decision. Defining Decision from a Psychological Perspective

In order to better understand the psychological aspects of the decision-making process, In the following section, an overview will be provided of the conceptualization of decision-making and the decision-making process, the typology of decisions, and the structure of the decision-making process, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant academic literature (Burduș and Popa, 2018; Saca and Solomon, 2013; Management Study Guide).

A decision is defined as the act of choosing a course of action aimed at achieving objectives while considering the available resources. To decide means to choose, from a range of possible courses of action, the one considered most advantageous for reaching certain objectives, based on specific criteria. Decision-making is the central point of management activities, as it is present across all managerial functions.

The main purpose of management decisions is the dynamic optimization of the correlation between the organization's real capabilities and the demand for products and services. The decision-making process consists of all the phases through which the managerial decision is prepared, adopted, and evaluated. The content of this process is illustrated in Figure 9.1.

The elements of the decision-making process are:

A. *The Decision-Maker* – the individual or group of individuals who must choose the most advantageous option from the available set of alternatives.

B. *The Alternatives* – the set of decision-making options.

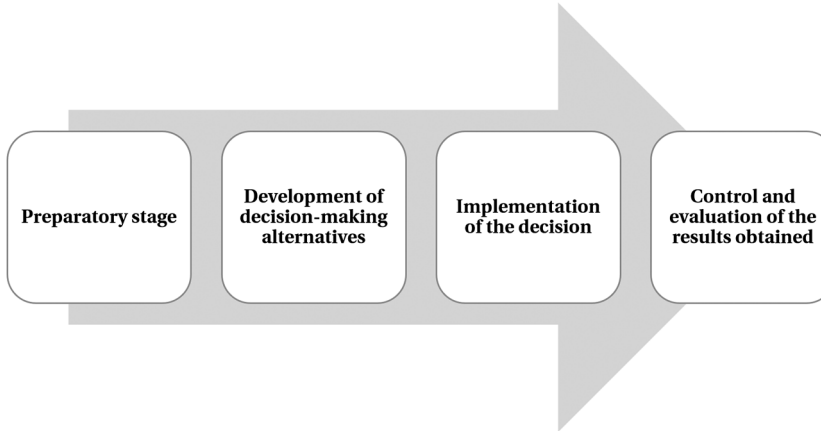


Fig. 9.1. The Content of the Decision-Making Process
Source: Developed by the author based on (Burduș and Popa, 2018; Saca and Solomon, 2013; Management Study Guide)

C. *The Decision Criteria* – the viewpoints of the decision-maker based on which the alternatives are established and the optimal option is selected.

D. *States of Nature (the Environment)* – concrete situations that determine the specific consequence associated with each alternative.

E. *The Objectives* – the intended consequences that are to be achieved.

F. *The Set of Consequences* – the set of potential outcomes that could be obtained for each criterion and for each state of conditions through the application of the decision-making alternatives.

The classification of managerial decisions according to various criteria is presented in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1. Classification of Managerial Decisions

Classification criterion	Types of decision
Importance	• Strategic decisions – made for long periods of time, setting the course of action for the organization to achieve its fundamental objectives; • Tactical decisions (implementation of a real problem in practice); • Operational or current decisions – aimed at eliminating or correcting deviations and disruptions.
Nature of the problem addressed	• Economic decisions; • Technical decisions; • Social decisions; • Organizational decisions.
Degree of knowledge of the studied process	• Under conditions of certainty: when there is a single state of nature for each alternative, with a probability equal to one; • Under conditions of risk: when multiple states of nature correspond to an alternative, with known probabilities of their occurrence; • Under conditions of uncertainty: when multiple states of nature correspond to an alternative, but the probabilities of their occurrence are unknown.
Number of criteria for selecting the optimal alternative	• Single-criterion decisions. Example – selecting machinery from a variety based on its technical capacity; • Multi-criteria decisions. Example – selecting an investment option based on the volume of investments and their payback period.
Level of creativity required for adoption	• Programmed decisions – when there is already an established course of action through procedures, norms, and pre-established policies. When a similar problem arises, the decision is made based on prior experience; • Non-programmed decisions – decisions related to significant issues that do not fit into specific frameworks.
Goal pursued	• Opportunity selection decisions – decisions made by a manager aiming to find ways to increase the company's profit; • Problem-solving decisions – decisions made in response to the emergence of specific problems; • Organizational decisions – made by the manager within the formal limits of their power and authority, with a spirit of impersonality; • Personal decisions – made by the manager as an individual, focusing on personal interests, with the company's interest taking a secondary role.

Source: Developed by the author based on (Burduș and Popa, 2018; Saca and Solomon, 2013; Management Study Guide)

9.2. Psychological Aspects of the Decision-Making Process

Currently, the psychological aspect of the decision-making process is increasingly recognized, based on the acceptance of the reasoning that the quality of decisions depends not only on the volume and accuracy of information but also on the following factors:

1. the behavior of those involved in the decision-making process;
2. the relationship between decision-makers and those responsible for implementing the adopted decisions.

In relation to the level of participation in choosing the optimal alternative and the volume and accuracy of the necessary information, several types of decision-makers have been identified: the gullible, the speculative, the risk-seeker, the balanced and prudent, the less careful, the fearfuland the indecisive (Burduș and Popa, 2018).

An important factor in the quality of the decision-making process is the relationship between the formal and informal authority of the manager. Thus, the closer these two types of authority are (i.e., the manager exercises both formal and informal authority with equal intensity), the higher the quality of the decision-making process will be. However, the most important psychological factor in the quality of the decision-making process is considered to be the relationship between the decision-maker and the decision implementer. In this context, it is important to analyze the decision-maker's behavior in the decision-making process.

It has been observed that, depending on the specific behavior exhibited, decision-makers fall into the following categories: the receptive, the exploiter, the hoarder, the merchant, and the productive (Zlate, 2007). The basic characteristics of these types are presented in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2. Characteristics of Decision-Makers Based on Their Specific Behavior in the Decision-Making Process

Category of the decision-maker	Basic characteristics
The Receptive	Tends to accept everything from the outside; does not act on their own initiative, but is influenced by others; waits for decision alternatives and therefore does not make the decision independently.
The Exploiter	Does not generate new ideas, but takes them from others through force or even cunning; exploits their qualities for as long as they are useful to them.
The Hoarder	Accumulates and saves; is afraid of waste; refrains from decisions that involve taking risks.
The Merchant	Lacks firm principles; is fluctuating; makes decisions relatively quickly, without thinking much about the consequences; opts for alternatives that bring personal advantages.
The Productive	Makes full and appropriate use of their available capacities, dedicating them to the decision-making process. This is the ideal decision-maker.

Source: Developed by the author based on (Saca and Solomon, 2013)

From a psychological perspective, both in the case of individual decisions and group decisions, it is important to analyze the factors that influence the decision-making process, either positively or negatively. These factors can be grouped into three categories, as shown in Figure 9.2.

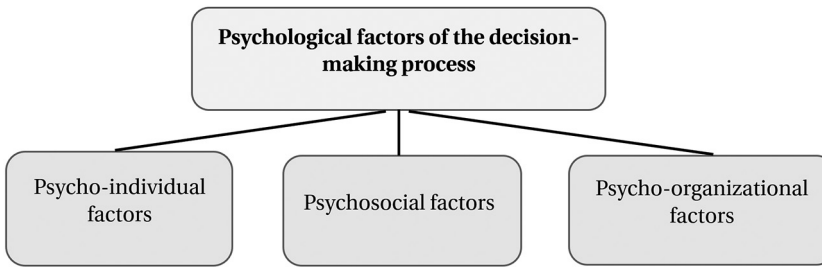


Fig. 9.2. Psychological Factors of the Decision-Making Process
Source: Developed by the author based on (Zlate, 2007)

Psycho-Individual Factors include the personal psychological traits of an individual: individual psychological aspects, personality traits, personality type, etc.

Psychosocial Factors refer to aspects related to role, the type of interaction and discussions within the decision-making group, as well as group phenomena and behaviors.

Psycho-Organizational Factors encompass the type of organization, its structure, and the specific nature of the leader's activity from a psychological perspective.

By examining the correlation of the essence of each of the above-mentioned groups of factors, we can infer the significance of psycho-individual factors (especially regarding managerial staff) in shaping the content of the other two groups of factors. Based on this reasoning, we will now refer more specifically to this group of factors.

Considering psycho-individual factors in the decision-making process has led over time to the formulation of the idea that the adoption of a decision, whether individual or group-based, is conditioned by the decision-maker's personal style. Decision-making styles, in turn, differ from one another based on, on the one hand, the decision-maker's tolerance for ambiguity (which can be high or low), and, on the other hand, the decision-maker's value orientation (toward tasks and technical issues or toward people and social issues). The combination of these dimensions has given rise to four decision-making styles (Saca, Solomon, 2013):

- Directive decision-making style;
- Analytical decision-making style;
- Behavioral decision-making style;
- Conceptual decision-making style.

The basic traits of the decision-making styles mentioned above are presented in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3. Basic Traits of Decision-Making Styles

Types of decision-making styles	Traits of decision-making styles
Directive Decision-Making Style	This style is characterized by a focus on tasks and technical issues, as well as a low tolerance for ambiguity. Individuals who practice this style are logical, systematic, practical, and efficient in their approach to solving problems. They focus on decisive actions and concentrate on facts.
Analytical Decision-Making Style	This style is also oriented toward tasks and technical issues, but with a high tolerance for ambiguity. Individuals with this style tend to overanalyze situations, place more importance on information and alternatives, are inquisitive, and spend more time making decisions. However, they respond well to new or uncertain situations.
Behavioral Decision-Making Style	This style is people-oriented and focuses on social concerns, with a low tolerance for ambiguity. Individuals with this style are suggestive, receptive to suggestions, display warmth and empathy, tend to avoid conflicts, and communicate openly with others.
Conceptual Decision-Making Style	This style is directed toward people and social issues but has a high tolerance for ambiguity. Those who practice this style have a broad perspective on problem-solving, consider multiple alternatives and future options, rely on intentions and discussions with others to gather information, take risks to find creative solutions, and adopt long-term perspectives.

Source: Developed by the author based on (Saca and Solomon, 2013)

Knowing one's own decision-making styles, being aware of their strengths and weaknesses, allows managers to review certain behaviors and adopt a more effective approach in the decision-making process.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Practical Assignment. Develop a questionnaire for evaluating a manager's decision-making style based on psychoindividual factors.

Practical Assignment. Create a psychological profile of a manager who follows a participative leadership style and explain how their qualities affect the decision-making process.

Case Study. FreshFruit Processing Ltd. is a medium-sized company specializing in the production of fruit juices, jams, and fruit concentrates. The company employs approximately 350 people and processes apples, plums, cherries, and berries supplied by local farmers.

Over the last two years, the company has experienced increasing market demand for natural products without preservatives. At the same time, competitors have invested in modern processing technologies that ensure higher productivity, lower production costs, and improved product quality.

The General Director has asked the Production Manager, Ms. Elena Rusu, to make a recommendation regarding the modernization of the company's fruit processing operations. Three alternatives are being considered:

1. Purchasing a fully automated fruit sorting and processing line;
2. Partially modernizing the existing production facilities by replacing only the outdated equipment;
3. Maintaining the current production system and focusing on improving employees' skills and production procedures.

A preliminary feasibility study shows that the fully automated system could increase production capacity by 30%, reduce raw material losses, and improve product consistency. However, the investment cost is very high and some employees fear that automation may lead to job reductions.

The partial modernization option requires a lower investment and would preserve most jobs, but the expected productivity improvements are moderate. Maintaining the current system involves minimal costs but does not solve the company's efficiency problems and may weaken its competitive position.

Although sufficient information has already been collected, Ms. Rusu continuously requests additional technical reports and postpones presenting a final recommendation to the General Director. She is concerned about making the wrong decision and worries about possible negative reactions from employees and local fruit suppliers.

Meanwhile:

- The Finance Manager strongly supports full automation because of the expected long-term financial benefits.
- Production supervisors prefer partial modernization because it would preserve workforce stability.
- Employees are increasingly anxious about job security.
- The General Director expects a final recommendation within one month because competitors are rapidly expanding their market share.

As the decision is delayed, uncertainty is growing within the company, employee morale is declining, and several suppliers have started negotiating contracts with competing processors.

Tasks:

a) Identify and classify the psychological factors affecting the decision-making process into:
   - Psycho-individual factors;
   - Psychosocial factors;
   - Psycho-organizational factors.

b) Based on the categories discussed in the course material (receptive, exploiter, hoarder, merchant, productive), determine which type of decision-maker Ms. Rusu most closely resembles. Support your answer with evidence from the case.

c) Determine which decision-making style best characterizes Ms. Rusu:
   - Directive;
   - Analytical;
   - Behavioral;
   - Conceptual.

   Explain your choice by referring to:
   - her tolerance for ambiguity;
   - her orientation toward tasks and people.

d) Assume that you have been appointed as an external management consultant.

Explain, step by step, how you would improve Ms. Rusu's decision-making process:

1. Define the decision problem.
2. Identify the information that is essential for making the decision.
3. Establish the evaluation criteria.
4. Compare the available alternatives.
5. Select and justify the most appropriate alternative.
6. Develop an implementation and communication plan.

SELF-EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. Define the concept of decision.
2. Clarify the content of the decision-making process.
3. Characterize the types of managerial decisions.
4. List the psychological factors that influence the quality of decisions.
5. Specify the types of decision-makers based on the degree of participation in choosing the optimal option and the volume and accuracy of the necessary information.
6. Specify the types of decision-makers based on the behavior they exhibit in the decision-making process.
7. Define the essence of psychoindividual, psychosocial, and psychoorganizational factors.

8. Clarify the decision-making styles shaped under the influence of psychoindividual factors in the decision-making process.
9. Describe the features of managerial styles:
   a. Directive;
   b. Analytical;
   c. Behavioral;
   d. Conceptual.

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10. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The concept of motivation. Types of motivation. 2. Psychological tools for effective staff motivation. 3. The role of organization and persuasion in staff motivation.	- defines motivation from a psychological perspective; - describes the psychological tools of effective staff motivation; - proposes intervention methods to stimulate intrinsic motivation in various organizational and environmental contexts.	The graduate autonomously selects and applies optimal psychological tools for motivating staff.

Terms of Reference:

• *Motivational Process* – the process that links individual work needs and motives to organizational objectives;

• *Psychological Motivation Tools* – strategies and tactics designed to enhance the effectiveness of the motivational process;

• *Persuasion* – the act by which a message sender advocates for an idea or thesis, attempting to promote a specific opinion;

• *Persuasion Tactics* – methods of operation used in the persuasion process.

10.1. The Concept of Motivation. Types of Motivation

In the professional context, motivation plays a key role in career progression, job satisfaction, and overall work performance. Individuals who are highly motivated tend to be more productive, innovative, and resilient in the workplace. They are also more likely to embrace challenges, persist in the face of difficulties, and successfully achieve their career objectives (Pennock, 2026).

From the perspective of organizational management, the essential issue of motivation concerns determining the means by which

the members of the organization, each with their own needs and personality, can be stimulated to contribute positively and effectively to the achievement of set objectives. The success or failure of leadership activities in addressing this issue largely depends on understanding the motivational process that connects individual work needs and motives to organizational goals. If we consider the simple fact that, even when performing the same type of activity, people act very differently, with varying effects on performance, we will better understand the complexity and, at the same time, the difficulty of the motivation process.

The ways managers choose to motivate their employees vary depending on certain criteria. Below we detail the most common forms of motivation currently used (Armstrong, 2006):

• ***Positive Motivation*** – salary increases, bonuses, profit-sharing, positive feedback, recognition, promotions;

• ***Negative Motivation*** – penalties, salary reductions, demotions, verbal reprimands.

• ***Cognitive Motivation*** – satisfying the intellectual needs of the employee, the need to be informed;

• ***Affective Motivation*** – measures to ensure the employee feels good at work, is appreciated and liked by colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates.

• ***Intrinsic Motivation*** – measures that encourage employees to get involved by their own will because it satisfies certain personal needs;

• ***Extrinsic Motivation*** – motivating employees to engage in projects because the results will generate positive reactions from the organization.

• ***Economic Motivation*** – salaries, bonuses, or salary penalties in case of errors;

• ***Moral-Spiritual Motivation*** – communicating trust from leadership, expressing praise and gratitude, or awarding honorary titles.

10.2. Psychological Tools for Effective Staff Motivation

The true challenge for managers is to build communities within work teams. However, the sense of community in the workplace is created through people who share the same values. Therefore, human resources are the strong foundation on which every organizational culture should be built. This begins during the recruitment and selection phase and continues to develop in the first days of work. Thus, by having team members who share similar values and motivations, it becomes easier to create a pleasant environment where employees collaborate and perform at high levels.

To begin with, it is necessary to try to bring change to the workplace by using the following strategies:

- Encourage communication and openness;
- Create a collaborative environment where employees can share ideas;
- During busy periods, check in with employees, ask how they are managing, and whether they have everything they need.

Most of the time, employees who are motivated at work exhibit positive behaviors, such as:

- Completing tasks with enthusiasm and on time;
- A positive attitude toward the organization;
- A low number of absences;
- Creativity and taking on responsibilities.

According to Pennock (2026) Psychological Assessment Tools for Motivation are used for assessing motivation are developed to evaluate, examine, and interpret different dimensions of an individual's motivational characteristics. They are applied for several purposes, such as:

- Identifying dominant motivational factors
- Assessing intrinsic and extrinsic motivators
- Evaluating goalsetting tendencies
- Measuring persistence and resilience
- Determining preferred reward systems.

Building on this definition, we can transition to the discussion

of psychological tools for motivating personnel, which represent structured methods used to assess and interpret individual motivational factors within an organizational context. These tools not only help identify sources of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, but also provide insight into how these factors influence employee behavior, performance, and commitment to organizational goals. Thus, following Pennock's (2026) perspective, it becomes relevant to further explore how these instruments are applied in practice to optimize employee motivation strategies.

Based on the considerations outlined above and on a synthesis of various approaches to motivational strategies, we conclude on the relevance of psychological tools for motivating personnel, as presented in Figure 10.1.

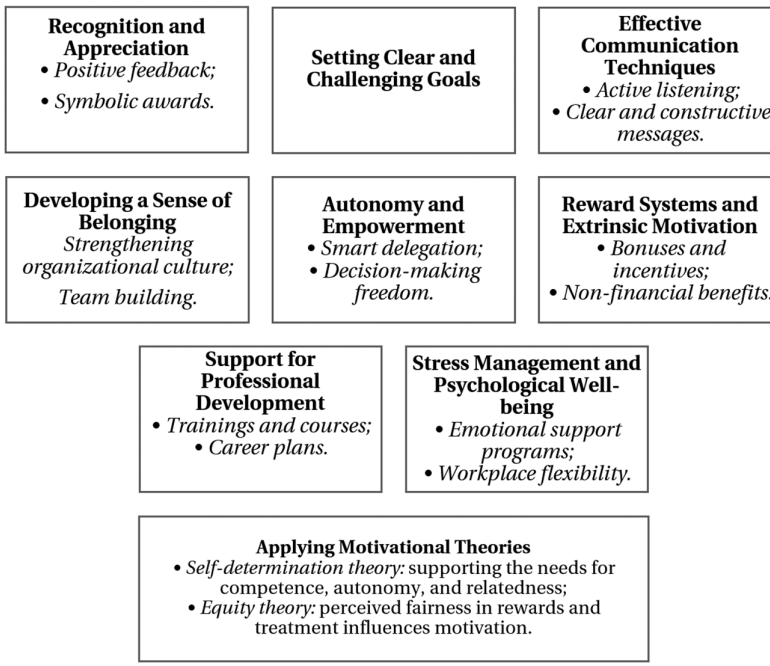


Fig. 10.1. Psychological Tools for Effective Staff Motivation

Source: Developed by the author based on (Kumar et al., 2025; Armstrong, 2006; Stancu-Drigă, 2025)

10.3. The Role of Organization and Persuasion in Staff Motivation

In their daily activity, managers are often required to persuade someone (employees, superiors, partners, clients, competitors, unions, etc.), which necessitates the development of specific persuasion skills. In his famous work *Rhetorike*, Aristotle developed a universal model of argumentation and persuasion. According to him, a speech acts on three relatively distinct levels of human personality (Eţco et.al, 2006, p.206- 207):

1. The Subjective Dimension of t he Human Being, characterized by emotional, instinctual, and hormonal influences ("pathos"), engages feelings, enthusiasm, and affective responses. This approach relies on psychological rapport and non-verbal communication, where posture, eye contact, facial expressions, tone of voice, speech rhythm, and breathing often carry greater communicative weight than verbal content itself.

2. The Objective, Logical, and Rational Dimension ("Logos").

3. Moral Behavior and Cultural Values ("Ethos"), shaped through education, traditions, beliefs, and social customs that evolve into normative frameworks. At this level, persuasive discourse appeals to the interlocutor's moral awareness, including principles such as fairness, ethical conduct, religious values, and patriotism.

Logical reasoning alone is insufficient for effective discourse, as argumentation only partially relies on rationality. Emotional engagement is often required to achieve persuasive impact, particularly in pragmatic, everyday communication. Effective persuasion operates through the integration of all three dimensions simultaneously. Neither pure logic, nor emotional appeal, nor moral invocation is adequate on its own; strong arguments typically combine all three aspects of human experience.

Argumentation refers to a structured discourse composed of words, concepts, ideas, and judgments. Its effectiveness increases

with clarity, sincerity, realism, and coherence. Demonstration, although sometimes conflated with argumentation, represents the process of providing supporting evidence. It complements logical reasoning by offering tangible and sensory validation through concrete facts, examples, statistics, images, audio-visual materials, case studies, press reports, specialized literature, physical samples, and witness testimony. Such demonstrations engage the senses and emotional perception and are typically used after the presentation of arguments. In many cases, a brief, well-constructed demonstration of two to three minutes can be more persuasive than extended verbal explanation.

Individuals respond differently to identical arguments depending on subjective factors such as perception, education, cultural background, sensitivity, and professional orientation. Consequently, the selection and sequencing of arguments depend on contextual variables, including the characteristics of the interlocutors, the environment, the atmosphere, the negotiation subject, and the chosen strategy and tactics. The order of presentation is particularly important: the initial argument should be strong, emotionally engaging, and clearly beneficial to the counterpart, while the concluding argument should also be impactful and decisive.

Persuasion can be defined as the capacity or art of convincing an individual, through rational or emotional means, to adopt a certain behavior or take specific action. Persuasiveness can be developed through demonstrated professional and moral competence, as well as the ability to instill in others ideas, values, judgments, and positive emotional states that influence their cognition, behavior, and internal experiences (Ețco et al., 2006, p. 207).

Persuasion involves advocating for an idea or thesis, trying to accredit an opinion. It carries no negative intent and is not reprehensible by nature—evidence for this lies in the judicial system, where pleading is an accepted part of proceedings, aimed at bringing evidence to light. Another example is political campaigning,

where candidates and their teams work to convince the public of the advantages of their platform and candidacy.

According to Joyal-Desmarais (2025), persuasive messages tend to be more effective when they are adapted to individuals' underlying motivations, including their values, goals, and identities. This principle is referred to as *motivational matching*.

Building on the *Continuum of Matching Effects*, the authors summarize three types of persuasion based on the degree to which a message aligns with a person's motivations:

1. Motivationally Matched Persuasion

This occurs when a message supports and reinforces an individual's motivations, values, needs, or goals. The stronger the alignment between the message and the person's interests, the greater the persuasive impact. In the context of employee motivation, managers can enhance engagement by emphasizing benefits that correspond to employees' career aspirations, need for recognition, or desire for personal and professional development.

2. Actively Mismatched Persuasion

This arises when a message conflicts with a person's values, needs, or identity. In such cases, the influence attempt is not only ineffective but may also trigger resistance or opposition. For instance, asking employees who prioritize self-interest to make personal sacrifices may reduce motivation and foster negative attitudes toward the organization.

3. Non-Matched (Neutral) Persuasion

This occurs when the message neither aligns with nor contradicts an individual's motivations. Such messages are neutral and typically have little to no persuasive effect. In employee motivation, presenting benefits that are irrelevant to an employee's interests is unlikely to significantly influence their attitudes or behavior.

To strengthen arguments and increase persuasive power, ***persuasion tactics*** (Eţco et al., 2006, p. 208) are employed, based on positive or negative influences as necessary.

Positive Persuasion Tactics include:

- ***Promises:*** Offering hope within reasonable limits (e.g., *"In time, if you use our services, you will also gain certain privileges."*)
- ***Recommendations:*** A form of vague, non-committal promise dependent on the partner's behavior (e.g., *"You can try other clinics, but we are the most experienced in your case."*)
- ***Rewards:*** Offering concessions in exchange (e.g., *"Grant us market exclusivity, and we will reduce the price by two percent."*)

Negative Persuasion Tactics include:

- ***Warnings*** (e.g., *"If we do not reach a satisfactory agreement, we may contact the machinery manufacturer directly or someone else."*)
- ***Threats*** (e.g., *"If you delay deliveries, I will have to find another supplier."*)
- ***Retaliation*** (e.g., *"Due to your unnecessary delays in accepting reasonable terms, we are temporarily suspending negotiations."*)

Psychological Factors that Condition Persuasive Action (Ețco et al., 2006, p.209)

Temperament:

- *Sanguine individuals* adapt quickly to new behavioral demands, are bold, decisive, and quick but resistant to others' suggestions.
- *Phlegmatic individuals* are reserved, deliberate in decision-making, patient, and receptive to calm, confident suggestions.
- *Choleric individuals* are mobile, impulsive, and intolerant of contradictions or unsolicited suggestions; they require detailed explanations.
- *Melancholic individuals* are sensitive, calm, indecisive, and hesitant; interventions with them must be delicate and tactful to avoid rejection.

Character:

- *Difficult individuals* who reject arguments should not be contradicted; patience and careful listening are key.

- *Know-it-alls* believe they are competent in all areas and crave recognition; it is best to agree with them outwardly while steering them constructively.
- *Indecisive individuals* carefully weigh their options and are sensitive to the method of argumentation; focus on the social and personal value of the proposed behavior.
- *Impulsive individuals* decide suddenly without much thought, motivated by novelty; treat them gently and respectfully.
- *Enthusiasts* are easily impressed by new ideas; their enthusiasm should be supported and gradually shaped into stable, appropriate behavior.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Case Study. As a manager, you are tasked with mobilizing the team to carry out interventions on a project that has been underway for some time. Each team member knows their role well, has already completed the majority of their tasks, and believes there is little left to do before the project's completion. However, since the client has requested modifications to the initial concept, more than half of the completed tasks will now need to be revisited. Knowing that convincing team members to repeatedly carry out a large series of tasks is not an easy job, you must develop a *persuasion strategy for each team member*. Specify how you will communicate the change of tasks to:

- Subordinates who fall into the *"know-it-all"* category,
- And those with an *"impulsive behavior."*

Case Study. "ProTech Components Ltd." is a manufacturing company producing electronic components for automotive systems. The company operates in a production environment with 60 assembly-line workers working in shifts under strict time pressure and quality requirements.

The following issues are explicitly observed in the production department:

- Decreased productivity (-15% in the last quarter)
- Increased assembly errors
- Low participation in improvement initiatives
- High turnover among junior operators
- Employee complaints regarding:
  - Lack of recognition and feedback
  - Weak sense of belonging
  - Perceived unfairness in rewards
  - Limited autonomy in task execution

Tasks:

Based on the situation described above and the motivational framework provided:

a) Select the most appropriate motivational strategy components from the following:

- Recognition and appreciation
- Effective communication techniques
- Goal setting
- Autonomy and empowerment
- Reward systems and extrinsic motivation
- Team cohesion (sense of belonging)
- Professional development support
- Stress management and well-being

b) Justify each selected component using only evidence from the case study (no external assumptions allowed).

c) Explain step-by-step how the chosen strategy would be applied in the production department.

SELF-EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. Define the concept of the motivational process.
2. Characterize the types of motivation, classified according to various criteria.
3. Through what positive behavioral manifestations can we determine that people are motivated at work?
4. Explain common motivation strategies.

5. Describe the levels of human personality influenced by discourse, according to Aristotle's assertions in "Rhetorike."
6. Define the concept of persuasion.
7. Describe persuasion tactics with positive influence.
8. Explain persuasion tactics with negative influence.
9. How does temperament influence persuasion?
10. How does character influence persuasion?

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11. PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLS FOR MARKET COMMUNICATION

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The essence and components of the image. 2. Principles of the image. 3. The psychology of communication with consumers.	- defines image; - describes the principles of image; - argues the significance of respecting the principles of image; - elucidates the psychological aspects of communication with consumers; - argues the impact of image quality and communication with consumers on the performance and competitiveness of organizations.	The graduate autonomously selects and applies effective tools for creating image and communicating with consumers.

Terms of Reference:

- *Image* – the mental representation of a being or thing;
- *Principle of the Image* – the rules or foundations that govern the creation, composition, and perception of an image;
- *Advertising* – a persuasive communication process through which a message is conveyed to a target audience in order to inform, convince, and influence.

11.1. The Essence and Components of the Image

One of the most prestigious dictionaries, Larousse Multimédia Encyclopédie, provides the following definition of an image: "the mental representation of a being or thing."One of the simplest definitions of an image is: "the reflection of an object in consciousness in the form of a sensation, perception, or representation."

In general psychology and communication studies, the concept of the image is closely related to the components of the volitional

and attitudinal act, which include the sequence: *perception – evaluation – opinion – conviction – attitude*. From this perspective, the image is not a simple reflection of reality, but the result of complex cognitive and evaluative processes that organize and interpret incoming information.

The formation of an image unfolds through several psychological stages. Initially, it is grounded in *knowledge and perceptual processing*, which provide the raw material for mental representation. This is followed by *value-based evaluation*, where information is interpreted in relation to the individual's personal value system and prior experience. Through this process of cognitive comparison and argumentation, an *initial value judgment (opinion)* is formed. Over time, repeated reinforcement and cognitive stabilization lead to the development of a *conviction*, which represents a more stable and resistant form of belief that influences attitudes and behavior.

This view is consistent with cognitive and constructivist theories of mind, according to which mental representations are actively constructed rather than passively received. In constructivist psychology, knowledge and perception are shaped through interaction between the individual and the environment (Jean Piaget). Similarly, cognitive science emphasizes that mental representations emerge through interpretative and integrative processes rather than direct copies of external reality.

Furthermore, research on mental imagery supports the idea that internal representations function as *quasi-perceptual constructs*. According to Pearson et al. (2015), mental imagery can be defined as a form of internal simulation that shares functional mechanisms with perception, even in the absence of external stimuli. This highlights the constructive nature of mental representation systems.

Therefore, *the image* can be understood as the result of evaluative processes activated within the individual's psychological structures, aimed at the formation of opinions and, subsequently, stable convictions. In applied contexts such as communication or professional interaction, understanding these mechanisms is essential for

adapting messages to the cognitive and emotional structures of the target audience, thereby facilitating effective empathy and influence.

From an applied psychological and communication perspective, the image can be structured into the following *core components:*

1. *Professionalism and Competence*

This refers to perceived expertise and effectiveness. In social psychology, competence is a key determinant of credibility and trust formation.

2. *Moral Integrity and Safety*

This dimension reflects ethical behavior, honesty, and perceived reliability, which strongly influence affective and attitudinal responses.

3. *Humanistic Orientation*

This involves empathy, interpersonal sensitivity, and the ability to establish meaningful social relationships, contributing to positive social perception.

4. *Professional Psychotechnical Skills*

This refers to the ability to apply psychological and communicational techniques in order to construct, maintain, and adapt an image in accordance with audience characteristics.

11.2. Principles of the Image

Based on research in psychology and communication studies, the concept of ***image*** can be understood as a structured construct shaped by perception, cognition, and social interaction. Whether referring to individuals or to commercial entities, image is formed through similar psychological mechanisms that govern attention, interpretation, and evaluation processes.

In the case of *personal image,* these mechanisms operate at the level of individual behavior and interpersonal perception. In communication theory, however, similar principles are extended to the

domain of *products and brands,* where image becomes a strategic tool for influencing consumer behavior. This continuity allows for a conceptual transition between the principles governing personal image and those regulating product image construction.

Psychological Principles of Personal Image

The construction of personal image is based on several interrelated psychological principles that determine how individuals are perceived and evaluated in social contexts.

1. Authenticity

Authenticity refers to the congruence between the individual's inner identity and external expression. It implies being oneself without attempting to imitate or artificially construct another persona. From a psychological perspective, a non-authentic image is difficult to maintain over time and is often detected by others due to inconsistencies in behavior and communication. Authenticity contributes to perceived trustworthiness and psychological coherence.

2. Coherence

Coherence denotes the internal consistency between appearance, verbal communication, and behavior. An individual's messages must be aligned across different expressive channels. For instance, promoting values such as seriousness or professionalism while simultaneously engaging in superficial behavior leads to cognitive dissonance in the audience and weakens the credibility of the projected image.

3. Care and Self-Presentation

Care refers to the management of physical appearance, hygiene, posture, and overall self-presentation. These elements significantly contribute to first impressions and social evaluation. From a psychological standpoint, care is not merely an aesthetic dimension but also an expression of self-respect and respect toward others, influencing social acceptance and interpersonal perception.

4. Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal behavior, including gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, posture, and vocal tone, plays a crucial role in shaping

interpersonal impressions. Research in communication psychology shows that non-verbal cues often convey more information than verbal messages. Therefore, positive, open, and congruent body language enhances interpersonal trust and perceived sincerity.

5. Reputation

Reputation represents the socially constructed dimension of personal image, formed through accumulated perceptions, experiences, and shared evaluations within a community. It extends beyond direct interaction and is strongly influenced by what others communicate about an individual in their absence. Consistency, integrity, and long-term behavioral patterns are essential in the formation of a stable and positive reputation.

6. Adaptability

Adaptability refers to the capacity to adjust one's image according to different social and situational contexts (e.g., professional, academic, or informal environments). This principle does not imply loss of authenticity but rather the ability to regulate self-presentation in a context-appropriate manner while maintaining core identity coherence.

7. Valuing personal strengths

An effective personal image emphasizes individual strengths such as empathy, intelligence, charisma, creativity, or professional competence. The conscious highlighting of these attributes contributes to differentiation and positive social perception, enhancing the overall effectiveness of personal image construction.

At a broader level of communication theory, these principles are not limited to interpersonal contexts. They can also be transferred to organizational and commercial communication, where the "self" is replaced by the "product" or "brand," and social perception becomes consumer perception. In this sense, the mechanisms that structure personal image also underpin the construction of product image, as both rely on attention, cognitive evaluation, emotional response, and memory formation.

This theoretical continuity is clearly reflected in the communication strategies described by Dobre (2015), who identifies a set of principles governing the dissemination and consolidation of product image in marketing contexts.

Principles of Product Image Construction

1. Principle of Repetition

A message, idea, or image must be consistently repeated in order to become stable within the audience's cognitive framework. Repetition enhances familiarity, and familiarity, in turn, fosters trust and acceptance. This mechanism is widely supported in cognitive and social psychology.

Example: In marketing practice, global brands such as Coca-Cola repeatedly use the same visual identity (red color, logo, bottle shape) and slogans across all advertising channels. This constant repetition across television, social media, billboards, and product packaging reinforces brand recognition.

As a result, consumers do not need to re-evaluate the brand each time they encounter it, which increases brand trust and purchase probability. Similarly, companies like McDonald's consistently repeat visual and auditory cues (logo, "I'm lovin' it" slogan) to strengthen brand memory.

Banks or telecom companies in the Republic of Moldova (e.g., Moldova Agroindbank, Moldcell, Orange Moldova) consistently repeat their brand colors, slogans, and service messages across TV ads, billboards, and mobile applications. This repetition strengthens brand recognition and increases consumer trust in financial or communication services.

2. Principle of Continuous Intensification of Action

Communication efforts should gradually increase in intensity to sustain attention and engagement. If an image remains static and does not evolve, audience interest tends to decrease over time due to habituation and reduced novelty.

Example: Technology companies such as Apple apply this principle through progressive product launches and increasingly

intensive marketing campaigns. Each new iPhone release is accompanied by escalating levels of communication: teaser campaigns, global launch events, influencer marketing, and continuous media coverage.

This gradual intensification maintains consumer anticipation and emotional engagement. Similarly, streaming platforms like Netflix intensify promotion closer to a new series release, increasing advertising frequency and social media presence to maximize audience attention at the critical moment.

Telecommunication and retail companies in Moldova often use this pattern during promotional campaigns (e.g., holiday discounts or new service packages). The communication starts with simple announcements, followed by increased advertising frequency on TV, online platforms, and outdoor media as the promotion date approaches, maintaining public attention and urgency.

3. Principle of Double Challenge

The effectiveness of an image is increased when it generates cognitive or emotional tension in the receiver. This may involve ambivalent reactions such as admiration and envy or attraction and rejection. Such psychological tension encourages deeper cognitive processing and increases memorability of the image.

Example: Luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton or Gucci often create advertising campaigns that generate a dual emotional response: admiration for exclusivity and beauty, combined with feelings of distance or inaccessibility due to high prices.

This "double challenge" strengthens brand prestige, as consumers both desire the product and perceive it as elite or difficult to obtain. Similarly, disruptive companies like Tesla **c**reate tension between innovation admiration and skepticism about technology reliability, which increases public debate and brand visibility.

In Moldova's growing service and retail sectors, premium-oriented businesses (e.g., high-end real estate agencies, luxury service providers, or exclusive educational programs) often generate a dual perception: admiration for quality and aspiration, but also

the impression that services are limited or selective. This "distance effect" increases brand prestige and makes the image more memorable.

In economic communication, these principles function as mechanisms of cognitive and emotional influence on consumer perception. Repetition ensures familiarity and trust, intensification maintains attention and engagement over time, while the double challenge enhances cognitive involvement through emotional ambivalence. In emerging markets such as the Republic of Moldova, these mechanisms are particularly relevant in sectors such as banking, telecommunications, and retail services, where brand perception plays a decisive role in consumer choice.

11.3. The Psychology of Communication with Consumers

Elements of advertising can be found as early as prehistory, with the exchange of goods and the need to identify the source of these goods and who produces them. The need to advertise, to "announce," is part of human nature, and among the oldest relics of various ancient civilizations, advertising-type announcements dating back over 5,000 years have been discovered. Advertising is a persuasive communication process through which a message is transmitted to a target audience with the purpose of informing, convincing, and influencing.

To understand the mechanism of advertising, we can view the entire process of advertising activity through the lens of the classic communication model (Shannon and Weaver's classic cybernetic paradigm developed in 1949): an emitter transmits a message through a channel to a receiver. This message is formulated in a code and is located in a communication context.

• ***Emitter:*** In the case of advertising, the emitter is the combination of the client (also called the advertiser, or the beneficiary of the advertisement) and the advertising agency.

• ***Message:*** This is the finished product developed by the advertising agency at the request of the advertiser, meaning the advertisement itself.

• ***Receiver:*** This refers to the public or target groups that the advertiser intends to promote the product/service to.

• ***Channel:*** This is one of the classic communication mediums (TV, print media, radio, outdoor advertising, cinema) or an unconventional medium.

• ***Code:*** This is specific to the target group being addressed by the advertisement, and it is the task of the advertising agency to identify this code and create the campaign considering the characteristics of the group (values and lifestyles, consumption habits, social conduct rules, etc.).

• ***Context:*** This refers to the communication, social, economic, and cultural environment in which the advertising campaign takes place.

According to Stoica, advertising psychology is the science that deals with the psychological aspects of advertising, consumer psychology, and the prediction of consumer behavior.

The main psychological issues specific to advertising mentioned by the author are:

- Capturing attention
- Awakening interest in the product being sold (or service, as applicable)
- Stimulating the pleasure of purchasing
- Selling

A widely recognized framework in digital marketing is the ***AIDA Model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action)***, which describes the cognitive stages a consumer typically passes through before completing a purchase. This model is frequently applied in online advertising strategies to structure persuasive communication and optimize conversion rates.

Attention

The first stage refers to attracting the user's attention in an increasingly saturated digital environment. This is commonly achieved

through targeted promotion and search engine or social media marketing. For instance, paid advertising campaigns on platforms such as Google Ads or Facebook Ads allow businesses to reach large and segmented audiences based on demographic and behavioral criteria. A practical example includes displaying visually striking banner ads or short video advertisements designed to interrupt scrolling behavior and prompt initial awareness of a product or service.

Interest

Once attention has been captured, the objective shifts toward generating sustained interest. At this stage, the ***CAB framework (Characteristics, Advantages, Benefits)*** is often applied:

- ***Characteristics*** refer to the intrinsic features of a product or service. For example, a smartphone may include a high-resolution camera, fast processor, and OLED display. These attributes are descriptive and value-neutral until interpreted by the consumer.
- ***Advantages*** represent the comparative value derived from these characteristics. For instance, a high-resolution camera allows users to capture professional-quality photographs compared to standard devices.
- ***Benefits*** reflect the personal value or outcomes experienced by the consumer. In the smartphone example, the benefit may be the ability to preserve high-quality personal memories or produce content suitable for social media or professional use.

To enhance interest in an online environment, marketers often employ behavioral analytics to segment users based on engagement levels. For example, users who repeatedly visit a product page may be targeted through *remarketing campaigns* or *personalized email marketing*. Additionally, e-commerce platforms improve engagement by:

- providing high-resolution product images from multiple angles (e.g., an online clothing store showing garments on models and in close-up detail),
- offering clear, structured product descriptions using persuasive yet concise language,

- incorporating customer testimonials and ratings to build credibility and reduce perceived risk.

Desire

At this stage, the goal is to transform interest into a strong motivational desire to purchase. This is typically achieved through emotional and sensory persuasion. For example, e-commerce websites often present products through lifestyle imagery, demonstration videos, or "in-use" scenarios that help consumers imagine ownership and practical application.

Additional techniques include promotional incentives such as:

- limited-time discounts (e.g., "20% off this weekend only"),
- coupon codes distributed via email or social media,
- loyalty programs that reward repeat purchases with points or exclusive benefits.

These strategies aim to strengthen perceived value and urgency, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase intention.

Action

The final stage involves facilitating the actual purchase decision. At this point, minimizing friction in the buying process is essential. One effective strategy is the implementation of a simplified, single-page checkout system, which reduces cart abandonment rates by limiting unnecessary steps.

Other important mechanisms include:

- multiple secure payment options (credit/debit cards, digital wallets, bank transfers), which increase accessibility and user trust,
- prominently displayed *call-to-action (CTA) buttons*, such as "Buy Now" or "Add to Cart," designed with clear visual hierarchy to guide user behavior.

For example, an online retail platform that offers a one-click purchase option combined with visible CTAs and fast checkout significantly increases conversion rates by reducing cognitive load and decision fatigue.

In conclusion, the AIDA model provides a structured and effective approach to understanding and influencing consumer behavior in digital marketing contexts, integrating psychological principles with practical advertising techniques.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Practical Assignment. Identify a real-life situation (from any possible source: television, social media, press, etc.) where someone is actively promoting their personal image or where the image of a product/service is being actively promoted. Highlight the actions that align with the principles mentioned above.

Case Study. As an employee of an advertising company, you are tasked with creating a commercial for one of the following three products (of your choice): an office furniture set; a tool kit for drivers; a laptop and document bag.

Specify 2–3 characteristics of the chosen product that you would highlight in order to attract attention and spark the interest of potential consumers. Name the methods you consider most relevant for advertising the chosen product.

Practical Assignment. Choose a company from the Republic of Moldova and examine its official website and social media pages.

Answer the following questions:

1. What values and messages does the company communicate?
2. Are these messages consistent with the company's visual identity and communication style?
3. Do the company's actions appear authentic and credible?
4. Identify examples that support your conclusions.

Practical Assignment. Select a promotional video or television advertisement produced by a Moldovan company.

Analyze:

- facial expressions;

- gestures and body language;
- tone of voice;
- background music and emotional atmosphere.

Discuss:

1. What emotions does the advertisement attempt to evoke?
2. How do non-verbal elements influence audience trust?
3. How do these elements contribute to the company's reputation?

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define the concept of image.
2. Specify the components of an image.
3. Describe the principles of personal image.
4. Explain the principles focused on promoting the image.
5. Argue the significance of respecting the principles of image.
6. Define the concept of advertising.
7. Specify the elements of the classical communication model.
8. Describe the elements of the classical communication model.
9. Describe the AIDA technique in online marketing.

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12. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SUCCESS IN BUSINESS

Knowledge/content units	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Content units: 1. The essence and constitutive elements of success. 2. Factors of the psychological potential of the winner. 3. Success strategies 4. The features of a winning CV	- defines success; - describes the factors of the psychological potential of the winner; - characterize the strategies of success; - argues the impact of success strategies on the performance and competitiveness of organizations; - to propose directions of intervention in order to motivate subordinates for personal and group success.	The graduate autonomously designs and monitors the application of different success strategies.

Terms of Reference:

- *Success* – the level and quality of achieving goals. Success is the result of a dynamic process oriented toward a goal, an outcome, and achieved through the actual implementation of specific means.
- *Psychological Potential of the Winner* – the set of mental and emotional traits that enable a person to achieve success in a competitive field — sports, business, education, art, etc.
- *Mental Strategy for Success* – a set of techniques and approaches used to cultivate a positive, success-oriented mindset.

12.1. The Essence and Constituent Elements of Success

A synthesis of the specialized literature on the psychology of success and high performance, including the works of Asghari (2023), Langabeer (2023), and the empirical study conducted by Zhuina, Zazykin, and Maydokina (2015), made it possible to conclude that success is a dynamic and multidimensional process. It is determined by the interaction between an individual's psychologi-

cal potential, the mental strategies employed to achieve goals, and the environmental conditions that support or hinder performance. The reviewed literature also highlights that sustained success requires continuous self-improvement, adaptability, perseverance, and the ability to learn from experience and feedback.

Success, in its essence, represents the level and quality of achieving goals. Success is the result of a dynamic process oriented toward a goal, an outcome, and achieved through the actual implementation of specific means.

Constitutive Elements of Success:

- Psychological potential of the winner;
- Mental strategies for success;
- The environmental context of success.

To optimize the performance of a success system, the following *complementary actions* are necessary:

- Evaluating potential;
- Learning and mastering the mental strategies for success;
- Modifying the environmental context.

In addition, success depends on consistency and perseverance in applying planned actions. Even a strong psychological potential cannot produce results without sustained effort and discipline. Therefore, continuous self-improvement plays a crucial role in maintaining progress.

Another important factor is adaptability. In a constantly changing environment, individuals who can adjust their strategies, rethink their goals, and respond effectively to challenges are more likely to achieve long-term success.

Moreover, motivation and clear goal-setting significantly influence performance. Well-defined objectives provide direction and help measure progress, while intrinsic motivation ensures persistence even in difficult situations.

Finally, feedback and self-reflection are essential components of a successful system. By analyzing results, identifying mistakes, and learning from experience, individuals can continuously

improve their strategies and increase their chances of achieving desired outcomes.

12.2. Factors of the Psychological Potential of the Winner

According to Zhuina et al. (2015), the psychological potential of the winner encompasses a set of psychological characteristics that support high achievement and successful performance. It includes achievement motivation, perseverance, strong volitional qualities, emotional self-control, self-confidence, and the ability to maintain goal-directed behavior in challenging situations. In a broader sense, the psychological potential of the winner refers to the mental and emotional resources that enable an individual to attain and sustain success in competitive domains such as sports, business, education, and the arts.

The factors of the psychological potential of the winner are as follows:

1. ***Cognitive Factors*** (Sensations; Perception; Memory; Thinking; Imagination; Language);
2. ***Affective and Emotional Factors*** (emotions, feelings, will);
3. ***Relational Factors****;*
4. ***Behavioral Factors****;*
5. ***Creation, Development, and Enforcement of One's Own Image****.*

Through a synthetic approach, the mentioned factors have been concretized as follows:

- ***Strong Motivation***
  - Intense desire to succeed.
  - Setting clear and ambitious goals.
  - The ability to self-motivate even in difficult conditions.
- ***Self-Confidence***
  - Belief in one's own abilities and strengths.

- Emotional stability regardless of obstacles.
- Resilience in the face of failure.

- ***Concentration Ability***
  - Maintaining focus on important tasks, ignoring distractions.
  - Focusing on the process, not just the result.
- ***Stress and Emotion Management***
  - Controlling anxiety at key moments.
  - Maintaining calmness and clarity under pressure.
  - Emotional adaptability.
- ***Tolerance to Effort and Frustration***
  - Psychological resistance to fatigue, pain, and temporary failure.
  - The ability to keep fighting even when conditions are not favorable.
- ***Competitive Spirit***
  - Enjoying the act of competing and surpassing oneself and others.
  - Viewing competition as an opportunity for growth.
- ***Self-Discipline***
  - The ability to follow rules, training plans, and strategies.
  - Sacrificing immediate comfort for long-term goals.
- ***Positive Thinking and Optimism***
  - Realistically positive interpretation of events (seeing opportunities, not just problems).
  - Refusal to be overwhelmed by negative thoughts.

12.3. Success Strategies

Experience demonstrates that, often, in full accordance with the numerous psychological arguments and/or strengths they possess, any winner knows, striving for perfection, how to implement a complex and efficient set of mental strategies for success in an active and dynamic manner.

The concept of mental strategy for success refers to a set of techniques and approaches used to cultivate a positive, success-oriented mindset. It involves a mental framework that helps a person overcome obstacles, achieve their goals, and attain outstanding performance in various areas of life. In fact, there is an interdependent relationship between the psychological potential of the winner and the mental strategies for success. Thus, the psychological potential of any winner forms the stable foundation upon which mental strategies for success can develop with great efficiency (Bârzan, 2019).

1. *The Visualization Strategy*

The visualization strategy consists in mentally projecting success by anticipating it and placing it within a future scenario. Its main function is to allow the individual to mentally experience a future reality as if it were already present, thereby accelerating psychological preparation and performance development. In this sense, visualization can be understood as a cognitive mechanism that seems to "compress time," enabling the person to mentally operate in a future context while remaining in the present moment.

Through this process, the individual symbolically transfers themselves into an alternative temporal and spatial framework. For a successful performer, visualization functions as a mental instrument that explores possible realities, where imagining an outcome is closely linked to the desire and intention to achieve it. This technique also helps in managing pre-performance anxiety, as the individual mentally rehearses the competitive situation before it occurs.

In addition, visualization facilitates faster acquisition of new skills during learning phases and enhances stability, confidence, and efficiency during performance refinement and self-improvement processes.

2. *The Goal Strategy*

The goal strategy is based on a clear mental representation of intended actions and outcomes, allowing successful individuals such as entrepreneurs, managers, or high performers to structure a pathway between the current situation and the desired result through a sequence of intermediate and operational objectives.

This strategy represents a form of structured action planning, which may be approached either in a forward (proactive) or reverse (retroactive) manner. The proactive approach begins from the present condition and gradually builds toward the desired future outcome by setting sequential goals over time. In contrast, the retroactive approach starts from the envisioned final state and works backward to determine the necessary steps required to reach the present conditions.

3. The Effective (Mastery) Management Strategy of Situations

This strategy allows the individual to integrate objectives into a continuously evolving and adaptive process. It represents a dynamic method of managing goals, in which progress is achieved step by step through structured transitions between key stages of development, relying heavily on prior experience.

Essentially, this approach emphasizes the gradual construction of success through the articulation of successive phases, each informed by previous actions and outcomes. Experience becomes a central resource, as each stage of progress builds upon earlier ones.

This strategy is grounded in three essential components:

a) Learning from Failure

Within this perspective, failure is treated as a learning mechanism rather than a final outcome. As various philosophical reflections suggest, mistakes serve as opportunities for development rather than permanent setbacks.

To fully capitalize on failure, a successful individual applies analytical methods such as:

- conducting a detailed examination of the failure's dimensions;
- identifying causal factors, whether intentional or unintentional, stable or unstable, internal or external;
- recognizing specific errors and determining necessary corrective actions;
- extracting successful elements that can be reused in future situations.

Learning from failure ultimately leads to the principle that repeated mistakes should be avoided, emphasizing continuous improvement.

b) Managing the Consequences of Failure and Extreme Situations

This component involves maintaining psychological stability even in adverse conditions. It requires avoiding demotivation and sustaining the belief that additional opportunities for success always exist. Overcoming difficult situations demands emotional balance, resilience, confidence, and determination.

c) Learning from Success

Success itself must also be analyzed, as individuals often fail to extract lessons from positive outcomes. There is a tendency to become complacent after success, which can hinder further progress.

Learning from success involves:

- analyzing the structure and components of successful outcomes;
- identifying the factors that contributed to success;
- recognizing effective actions that can be replicated;
- determining possible improvements for future performance.

In practice, individuals interpret outcomes in a structured way: failure leads to correction and learning, while success leads to consolidation and replication of effective behaviors.

4. Rapid and Efficient Change Strategy

This strategy refers to the ability of an individual to rapidly shift between contrasting psychological states, a process often described as mental switching. Such transitions may include changes from admiration to rejection, from emotional involvement to detachment, from joy to sadness, or from intense focus to relaxation.

The purpose of this flexibility is to generate specific emotional or cognitive states in oneself or others, depending on situational demands. Effective use of this strategy requires high adaptability, strong psychomotor flexibility, and clear communication skills. It

also relies on the individual's internal database of emotional experiences, which is continuously enriched through lived experience and reflective processing.

5. Influence Strategy

The influence strategy focuses on guiding another person toward a mental state that supports the achievement of a specific objective. Unlike self-directed regulation strategies, this approach targets external individuals and aims to shape their emotional and cognitive responses.

This strategy may operate through two main directions:

- **constructive influence**, which encourages openness, cooperation, and positive engagement;
- **competitive or destabilizing influence**, which may induce uncertainty, hesitation, or reduced confidence in a competitor.

The chosen approach depends on the intended goal, such as negotiation success or competitive advantage.

Constructive influence can generate states such as openness, willingness to communicate, active listening, responsiveness, and cooperation. Conversely, destabilizing influence may involve inducing stress, confusion, or hesitation through verbal and non-verbal techniques such as strategic communication, spatial dominance, or psychological framing.

6. Relational Strategy

The relational strategy is based on the idea that success is facilitated through interaction and mutual exchange with others. It emphasizes that personal development and performance improvement occur both through self-reflection and through engagement with the social environment.

This strategy operates on two fundamental assumptions:

1. Success requires the presence and contribution of others.
2. Individual achievement is rarely, if ever, entirely independent.

Relational strategy is therefore grounded in communication and learning through interaction. A key mechanism within this

approach is behavioral modeling, where individuals adapt and refine their own behavior based on the observation of others.

For this process to be effective, individuals must possess strong self-awareness and the ability to objectively evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. This enables them to selectively adopt useful traits, behaviors, or strategies from others while maintaining personal authenticity.

7. META Strategy

The META strategy is a highly advanced cognitive approach that allows individuals to observe and analyze their own behavior while actively engaged in an action. It involves a dual position: the individual acts while simultaneously monitoring and evaluating their performance.

This perspective enables real-time adjustment and continuous improvement of ongoing actions. By adopting an observer stance, the individual gains emotional distance from the situation, which enhances objectivity and reduces psychological stress.

The META strategy functions through four main stages:

1. Triggering

During action, the individual becomes aware that their performance can be improved based on internal or external signals indicating suboptimal results.

2. Context Analysis

The individual mentally detaches from immediate involvement and evaluates the situation as an observer, allowing for objective assessment and continuous feedback.

3. Identification of Causes

At this stage, the individual determines the factors responsible for performance issues and identifies necessary adjustments.

4. Implementation of Corrections

Finally, corrective actions are applied immediately, and the individual returns to an active role, now operating with improved efficiency.

Additionally, the META strategy serves as an emotional regulation tool, as it reduces the intensity of negative emotional states

such as anxiety, fear, or stress. By shifting focus from emotional immersion to analytical evaluation, the individual gains clarity and control over their reactions.

Overall, this strategy enables rapid transitions between participation and observation, ensuring continuous optimization of performance during action.

12.4. The Features of a Winning CV

Rules for a winning CV:

• Concise presentation – The CV should be short, clear, and focused on the most relevant information, avoiding unnecessary details.

• Generating the desire for a meeting – It must be attractive enough to convince the employer to invite the candidate for an interview.

• Energetic and empowering presentation – The language used should reflect confidence, motivation, and a positive professional attitude.

• Presentation of results – Emphasis should be placed on concrete achievements, not only on duties and responsibilities.

• Reflection of professional experience – Work experience should be clearly structured and relevant to the targeted position.

• Coherence – The CV must have a logical structure, ensuring that information is easy to follow and understand.

• Impeccable presentation – The document should be free of spelling, grammar, and formatting errors.

• Attachment of recommendation letters and other useful evidence – Supporting documents can strengthen credibility and increase the chances of selection

In contrast, when these rules are not respected, a CV becomes ineffective and may reduce employment opportunities. Therefore, it is important to understand the *most common mistakes* in CV writing in order to avoid them:

• Lack of clear structure – information is presented chaotically, without logical order, making it difficult to read.

• Incomplete or inaccurate information – details about education, experience, or skills are missing or incorrect.

• CV that is too long or too short – it either includes unnecessary details or does not provide enough relevant information.

• Lack of job adaptation – the same CV is sent for all positions without customization

• Spelling and grammar mistakes – these negatively affect the candidate's professional image.

• Exaggeration or falsification of information – this can lead to loss of employer trust.

• Absence of concrete achievements – only duties are listed, without results or accomplishments.

• Poor design – the format is unprofessional, hard to read, or inconsistent.

Thus, a successful CV is not only well-written but also carefully adapted to avoid these common errors, increasing the chances of professional success and a positive impression on employers.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Case Study. A managerial position has been announced, with the following candidate requirements: advanced computer skills; negotiation skills; proficiency in an international language; organizational abilities; high level of personal organization. Previously, you worked in a company as a department manager, where you performed at a high level, even contributing significantly to the expansion of the customer base and the promotion of the company's image. Prepare a CV that reflects your past achievements, presenting them in a way that creates an attractive image for recruiters.

Case Study. The company "TechSolutions" is implementing an important project aimed at the digitalization of internal processes.

Andrei, newly appointed as project coordinator, observes that the team is disorganized, deadlines are unclear, and progress is slow.

Main problem: lack of clear direction and action structure.

Tasks:

Based on the presented situation:

a) Describe the main difficulty within the company (e.g., lack of organization, low performance, stress, inefficient communication, etc.).

b) Choose one of the studied strategies (e.g., Visualization Strategy, Goal Strategy, META Strategy, etc.). Justify why that strategy is appropriate for the situation.

c) Describe the concrete steps for applying the chosen strategy in the company context.

d) Explain how the strategy helps improve the situation (performance, organization, decision-making, communication, etc.).

e) Describe the possible results after applying the strategy (e.g., increased efficiency, reduced errors, improved collaboration).

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Present the essence of success.
2. Describe the key elements of success.
3. List complementary actions necessary to optimize the performance of a success system.
4. Define the concept of the winner's psychological potential.
5. Define the mental strategy of success.
6. Describe the mental strategies of success:
   - Visualization strategy
   - Goal-setting strategy
   - Efficient situation management strategy
   - Rapid and effective change strategy
   - Influence strategy
   - Relational strategy
   - META strategy
7. Present the rules for perfecting a winning CV.

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STRATEGIES FOR EVALUATING THE ACADEMIC RESULTS

The evaluation of academic results for the course unit is conducted through the following components:

- **Ongoing Assessment** – Conducted throughout the semester during lectures, seminars, consultations, and scheduled tests, in accordance with the academic calendar. This component accounts for *60% of the final grade.*
- **Final Assessment** – Administered through a written examination using the institutional test, which consists of **two subjects** with tasks covering three levels of complexity: knowledge, application, and integration. Alternatively, the test may be conducted via the USM MOODLE educational platform (www.moodle.usm.md). The exam grade represents *40% of the final course grade.*
- **Evaluation of the Individual Study Product** – This assessment is conducted outside regular class hours, typically during consultation hours or sessions of the scientific student circle.

All teaching, learning, assessment, and guidance activities related to individual study may take place either face-to-face or online.

The *final grade* for the course unit is calculated in accordance with the *USM Academic Performance Evaluation Regulations***,** using the following formula:

Final Grade = Semester Grade (60%) + Exam Grade (40%)

The *semester grade* is determined based on the components of ongoing assessment as follows:

Semester Grade = (T_1 + T_2 + ACA + IS) / 4

Where:

- **T_1** – Mandatory Test 1
- **T_2** – Mandatory Test 2

- **ACA** – Average of ongoing assessments, calculated as the arithmetic mean of grades obtained in seminars and lectures
- **IS** – Grade awarded for the final individual study product

Minimum Requirements for Passing the Course:

1. Achieving the *minimum passing grade* for the semester;
2. Achieving the *minimum passing grade on the final exam*;
3. Submission of the *individual study product*;
4. Attendance of *at least 70%* of the total number of direct contact hours.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE INDIVIDUAL STUDY

No.	Course unit title, the number of hours for the individual study	The tasks	Development strategies and presentation methods	Final product	Evaluation criterias
1	Social and Economic Psychology, full-time education, 44 hours of IS	**Identification of a problem requiring intervention through psychological tools** (e.g., labor conflict, ineffective motivational system, inappropriate management style, mismanagement of team development stages, etc.); **Description of the psychological tools appropriate for the selected problem**, based on a synthesis of theoretical and empirical approaches; **Identification of the most relevant psychological tool for the specific problem**, presentation of the application method in the given case, and justification of the chosen approach.	**Achievement Strategies** Development of a project aimed at optimizing business management through the application of psychological intervention tools. **Presentation Methods** Public oral presentation (conducted either face-to-face or online, as appropriate), accompanied by a written version submitted in either printed or electronic format.	**Product Type** A project focused on optimizing business management through the application of psychological intervention tools. **Product Structure** **Organizational Description** – *3–4 pages* A concise overview of the organization, including its structure, operations, and relevant contextual details. **Case Description** – *1 page* Presentation of a specific issue requiring psychological intervention (e.g., labor conflict, ineffective motivational system, inappropriate management style, mismanagement of team development, etc.). **Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach** – *5–6 pages* A synthesis of theoretical and empirical perspectives addressing the selected problem, with a focus on appropriate psychological tools and intervention strategies. **Solution Strategy** – *2–3 pages* Identification of the most relevant psychological tool for the specific case, detailed explanation of the application method, and justification of the chosen approach. **Bibliography** – *1–2 pages* A properly formatted list of **at least 5 academic sources** used to support the project.	Knowledge of psychological tools relevant to various managerial situations Ability to integrate knowledge across theoretical and practical contexts Skills in information search and systematization Ability to construct and defend one's own position through coherent argumentation Creativity and innovative thinking Cognitive flexibility and adaptability
2	Social and Economic Psychology, part-time education, 72 hours of IS				

** The problem identified as the subject of research may be sourced from publicly available information provided by organizations, published in periodicals, or obtained through communication with representatives of specific organizations.*

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