

## A CASE STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF MANAGERIAL TECHNIQUES OF A SELECTED TEAM MANAGER IN THE BUSINESS PRACTICE

<sup>a,b,c,e</sup>MONIKA DÁVIDEKOVÁ, <sup>d,f</sup>SOŇA DÁVIDEKOVÁ,  
<sup>c,g</sup>MICHAL GREGUŠ ML.

<sup>a</sup>Vysoká škola manažmentu, Panónska cesta 17, 851 04 Bratislava

<sup>b</sup>Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, Slovak University of Technology, Ilkovičova 3, 85101 Bratislava

<sup>c</sup>Faculty of Management Comenius University in Bratislava, Odbojárov 10, P.O.Box 95, 820 05 Bratislava

<sup>d</sup>Veřejnosprávní vzdělávací institut o.p.s., Náměstí Svobody 494, 696 62 Strážnice

email: <sup>e</sup>monika.davidekova@st.fm.uniba.sk

<sup>f</sup>davidekova@sterling-invest.com

<sup>g</sup>michal.gregus.ml@fm.uniba.sk

**Abstract:** The way of working has significantly changed over the past century. Before, people were working in manufactures executing the same task each day. With the industrial revolution the composition of working changed significantly. The evolution went from individually executed tasks to tasks executed in teams. Team work represents the future of working. However, team has to be created and maintained, otherwise the team will split up. The leadership and management of a team lies in the responsibility of the team manager who is monitoring the performance of his/her team members. Yet, how does the team manager perform? This paper presents the results of executed case study analyzing the managerial techniques applied by a chosen manager in practice. Discussion proposes improvements to detected drawbacks.

**Keywords:** management, team work, leadership, managing virtual teams.

### 1 Introduction

Today's business world is characterized by dramatic turbulent changes in uncertain environment with international multicultural influences and global international companies. Big corporate companies with high number of employees are struggling to survive and to succeed in the market with their products and services. Nowadays, in times of cost reducing, teams are becoming larger and far more employees are assigned to one team manager when compared to the past. One manager has to lead a whole group of specialists and create a team.

A manager "directs the activities of the organizational unit in order to achieve set goals"<sup>1</sup>. The task of the manager is to care for the members of his/her team, their needs, to ensure their efficient and successful execution of assigned working tasks and to ensure meeting of the set corporate goals. The role of a manager is no easy task as the leading of people requires specific skills, knowledge and personal attributes. A manager "works with people and coordinates their activities in order to achieve the goals of the organization"<sup>2</sup>. Leading people is no easy task as people are unique and it is no easy task to connect their individualities and get them working towards common goal. Not every person is capable of it. However, everyone can learn it.

A manager is a person in the position or "a managerial employee whose activities are devoted to particular field, who applies his/her vision, has strategic perspective, works with outlooks and looks into the future"<sup>3</sup>. Some managers are born managers, granted with necessary skills and character attributes, other can learn the necessary skills and talents and become a manager.

To become a manager, the title from a university is not enough, or to take a vacancy with the manager description. To be a manager, it means to meet decisions. "A manager is not the only one who is affected by the results of his/her decisions, his/her decisions are affecting other subjects"<sup>4</sup>. To be a manager means

to be able to manage the activities and tasks, lead assigned workers and solve conflicts among team members or between team members and other workers from other departments. "A manager is the employee of the organization, who coordinates the activities of one or more workers of a particular organizational unit and is responsible for the results resulting from the activities of this organizational unit."<sup>5</sup> His/her "main mission is to manage goal-oriented the activities of others through application of managerial functions indirectly, thus, through his/her assigned, ensuring the achievement of organizational goals"<sup>6</sup>. "Managers are responsible for the achievement of results through of specialized effort of other persons, individuals, in groups or in organizations"<sup>7</sup>. "Management is first of all a process of leading people"<sup>8</sup>.

In today's world, when big corporate companies build local and virtual distributed teams across the whole organization or within a department of that organization, which consist of one nationality or more frequently of more cultures. These global conditions increase the requirements on the management. To lead a virtual distributed team and to become one with the team is not simple. It is very difficult to create a pleasant comfortable working atmosphere for the whole team out of a toxic environment, which is sabotaging the team functioning and is preventing any type of performance. To create a place, where the workers will proactively execute working tasks and achieve far higher results thanks to created synergy effect.

The employees today are under the cause of fluctuation are leaving usually due to their superiors. "People leave managers, not companies"<sup>9</sup>. The managers are embodying the organization for them as they are denoting the main factors which are influencing their future. They are the subjective judges of their performance. There are many reasons for leaving jobs. However, most of them are influenced by the direct superior manager directly or indirectly. Due to a bad manager a good employee can leave the organization. The organization won't recognize that a good employee has left as the organization will read solely the bad reference which the manager wrote into the system. A new employee will be found and take over the tasks of the left employee who can be better or worse at the employee before. Yet, he/she will need a quite long time to learn everything necessary in order to execute the tasks as efficiently as the worker before. And the organization is losing time and costs.

A good leader can inspire and motivate the assigned workers. Such a manager each company is searching for. Despite of the fact, that many specialized expert books are devoted to management, many researchers are also today researching this field as new obstacles are continuously showing up in business practice. This article is describing the performed case study of the application of managerial techniques in business practice of a selected manager.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 describes the research subject and basic managerial techniques. In section 3 the results of observation are stated and discussed. The research results are summarized in the conclusion.

### 2 Research Object and Methodology

In this chapter the research object and the used research techniques are specified.

<sup>1</sup> MAJTÁN, M. a kol. *Manažment*. Bratislava: SPRINT, 2008, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> MIKUŠ, P.; DROPPA, M.; BUDAJ, P. *Vybrané problémy teórie manažmentu a marketingu*. Ružomberok: VERBUM, 2006, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> HANGONI, T.; IMRICHOVÁ, A. *Manažment a jeho aplikácia v sociálnej práci*. Gorlice: ELPIS, 2010, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> PAPULA, J.; PAPULOVÁ, Z. *Manažérské rozhodovanie: Prístupy a postupy*. Bratislava: Kartprint, 2014, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> RUDY, J.; LUPTÁKOVÁ, S.; SULÍKOVÁ, R.; VARGIC, B. *Organizačné správanie*. Bratislava: Faber, 2007, p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> MIKUŠ, P.; DROPPA, M. *Základy manažmentu*. Ružomberok: VERBUM, 2010, p. 40.

<sup>7</sup> DONNELLY, J.; GIBSON, J.; IVANCEVICH, J. *Fundamentals of management*. Boston: IRWIN, 1992, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> MÍKA, V. T. *Základy manažmentu. Virtuálne skriptá*. [online]. 2006, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> BUCKINGHAM, M.; COFFMAN, C. W. *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999, p. 34.

### 1.1 Research Methodology and Research Process

The research was performed in form of long-term participated covert observation in current business practice in selected private company. The business activities of this company lied in financial sector. Due to this reason, the company gave a higher stress on security. The period of time devoted to this observation exceeded two and half years.

### 1.2 Research object

The selection of the research object was random selection of available research objects fulfilling selection criteria which were: managerial position and no managerial education.

The object of observation was a male employee in his mid-thirties in managerial position of a team manager of a software development team of an international company. The assigned team was responsible for maintenance and development of software applications. The team was composed of two nationalities distributed into two separate locations.

The research subject was in charge of employees of his nationality located in one city. The workers of both locations were working in distributed teams on a daily base via information communication technology means like phone, email, video-conference etc. Occasionally, also visits occurred between these locations if it was necessary.

The position of the research object can be described as lower managerial line position. The observed manager was responsible for the leading of assigned team which was working for foreign market. At the beginning of the observation, the assigned team consisted of 10 workers. At the end of the observation, the team consisted of 21 workers and hiring was planned.

This was the first managerial position of observed object without past experience. He achieved this position approximately one year prior the observation start. Before, he worked for this company in the position of project manager for approximately 2 and half years with moderate results. Before he worked for another company as software developer where he gathered limited developer experience.

He achieved the position of a line manager due to the structural changes in the company which decided to expand and needed managers. The company decided to appoint existing employees with knowledge about company's structure and processes into managerial positions. The search for new employees, especially the search for managers, takes a lot of time and resources. The company decided to go this way.

The direct superior of observed manager was a foreign director of the department who was assigning tasks to him and getting him familiar with his tasks. Another direct superior of the observed manager was a local manager who was responsible for several departments of local company. Although some hierarchical changes occurred during the observation, the described relationships were not touched.

The foreign director had also a foreign manager who was responsible for the assistance services of the director and managing together with the director the foreign team of workers. That foreign manager was on the same position as the local observed manager, thus, those were colleagues.

The director led his department with supporting way of leadership and tried to professionally develop the talents of his workers, ensured the budget for his department and projects for all his workers. The observed manager preferred to lead with power and information control.

### 1.3 Hypothesis

The working hypothesis was as follow: We assume, that for the efficient execution of managerial functions in a managerial

position, the managerial educational preparation may lead to better results.

## 3 Research Results

In this chapter the research results are presented and discussed. The research results are demonstrated on 3 main tasks which were in the responsibility of observed manager. Each of the tasks represent a specific level of management: operational, tactical and strategic management.

### 3.1 Operation

The typical operational task of observed manager was represented by assurance of necessary access rights and access accounts and assurance of working equipment for his workers. Without a computer, the software developer cannot develop or without an access right or account he/she cannot efficiently develop or do maintenance of assigned software applications.

The company disposed of dedicated specialized processes for each kind of access or each type of equipment. Most of them were done via internal ticketing systems. However, for each type of access request another system has to be used.

### 3.2 Tactics

The typical tactical task of observed manager was represented by allocation of workers to projects. It is important to have adequate amount of work for each worker in order to avoid overworking of assigned employees or to prevent their inefficiency of not working. To this task also the assurance of deputy organizing belongs together with hiring of new workers.

### 3.3 Strategy

Among strategic tasks of observed manager we count his responsibility for assurance of achieving project deadlines in timely manners. The projects of that company were often measured in years. They also represented the source of income for the department. In managing this task, the manager faces pressure from above and reluctance from the bottom.

### 3.4 Evaluation of approaches, methods and techniques applied in the phases of decision making

In this section, the evaluation of used types of thinking by observed manager during execution of above mentioned tasks is presented (tab.1). Among these types of thinking belong<sup>10</sup>:

- Intuition* – actions based on feelings without the use of analytical techniques and methods or methodologic systematic procedures,
- Mechanical* thinking – actions based on use of methodologies of recommended analyses according to existing procedure,
- Strategic thinking* – use of analyses which divide between present and future and consider possible outcomes, their causes and context.

**Table 1: Evaluation of used thinking concepts during the given phases of the decision making**

Phase of problem solving	Operation	Tactics	Strategy
Identification	a	c	b
Analysis	a	b	b
Search and creation of solution variants	a	b	b
Selection of decision criteria	a	b	b
Selection, Decision making	b	b	a
Implementation of chosen decision	b	a	a
Control over implementation of decision	b	a	a

<sup>10</sup> PAPULA, J.; PAPULOVÁ, Z. *Strategické myslenie manažérov: Za tajomstvami strategického myslenia*. Bratislava: Kartprint, 2010, p. 141-152.

### 3.4.1 Operation

The solutions regarding the issues with the access rights and accounts were sought separately and partially, it is not possible to plan it. The preparation of accesses is possible solely in case of a new software application or worker if it is already certain which system he/she will be charge of. However, usually such an issue with missing access rights or accounts occurred unpredictably, was immediately reported and has to be solved urgently. All the analysis was performed by the worker in the need of the access. In the case of a new system or worker, the accesses have to be planned and requested sufficiently upfront.

At the beginning of the observation consulted the observed manager every step with the experienced team members. However, he made the decision individually. The implementation of the solution included the access requesting (finding the right system, the correct request form, filling out all necessary details and submitting it). At the beginning, every single worker was executing the request process on his/her own. This changed during the observation on the proposal of the observer and in the middle of the observation, it was processed by one assigned worker who was in charge of it for the whole team. This change increased the efficiency and speed of the whole process as the individual workers had to gather the necessary knowledge of access requesting each single time due to the occurring changes of those processes in the company. However, at the end of the observation the worker of this task has been changed by a team information email of the manager without any further communication before or after what caused a lot of distraction in the whole team. This was perceived as unprofessional behavior of a manager by whole team. The aspect of missing communication can be seen as the demonstration of missing experiences, nontransparent handling and missing education. The communication denotes an essential part of management.

### 3.4.2 Tactics

The observed manager consulted the problematic of resources allocation to particular projects with experienced senior workers of his team. During the discussions with the senior workers he tried to assess the work load of all team members, if there is a need of more workers to be assigned to a project or to hire a new worker. The selection of the solution variant was made in group approach too.

In the phase of criteria selection, which are important for the selection, observed manager used individual autocratic directive style of decision making. He was the only one who was informed about the project work load of particular workers as well as about the future planned projects or hiring plan with new workers joining the team soon. That was the reason for using individual autocratic directive style for the criteria selection, decision making as well as the implementation. However, it is necessary to add, that the observed manager was implementing the instruction of the supervising director without own contribution.

Also in tactics it is necessary to mention the high disinterest in the less experienced particular team members. Whereas the observed manager did consult this topic with seniors who were solely 2 to 3 members of his team, the opinions of the remaining team members were not considered. As the leader and manager of a team, a manager is responsible to enable the personal growth of all assigned team members as well as to manage the appropriate work load of all of them.

### 3.4.3 Strategy

In strategic field the situation was alike the tactical area. The observed manager discussed the state of selected projects with each single worker. He was the only one informed and executed all phases of decision making individually using directive autocratic style.

Also in this area the lack of communication was detected. The individual team members did not know which worker was assigned to which project, who has experience with which technology etc. This everything had a significant drawback that too much productive time was wasted with the repeated discovery of known, misunderstandings and miscommunication.

### 3.5 Evaluation of the application of individual and team approaches for the problem solving in the phases of decision making

In this section, the evaluation of used types of approaches which were applied by observed manager during the execution of above mentioned tasks is presented (tab.2). Following approaches are recognized<sup>11</sup>:

- a) *Individual approach*:
  - I. *Directive style* – very little tolerance, fast logic decisions, preference of short-termed effects and standardized solutions
  - II. *Analytic style* – logic, rational, with emphasize on execution of detailed analyses, elaboration of solution variants and their evaluation, tolerant
  - III. *Conceptual style* – creation of several distinguish solution variants based on creativity and intuition, preference of strategic views and tolerance to untraditional solutions
  - IV. *Behavioral style* – focused on creative solutions, open to incentives from surroundings, use of communication for conflict mitigation and elimination, requires the acceptance of given position towards subordinates
- b) *Team (group) approach* – used mostly by solutions of non-programmable, individual and unrepeatable procedures
  - I. *Brainstorming* – focusing on creativity of group members, allows creation of new untraditional alternatives and selection of generally acceptable solutions
  - II. *Delphi technique* – based on anonymous presentation and mutual evaluation of the opinions of individual group members, does not require the presence on one place if compared to brainstorming
  - III. *Formal (quiet) group technique* – written discussion of members located in one place, avoidance of possible contradictory opinions and elimination of emotional crashes
  - IV. *Affirmative cards method* – used by higher number of discussion attendance, the color of the card expresses the opinion of the discussion member
  - V. *Pair selection technique* – additional technique, selects the most suitable solution by mutual comparison of proposed variants
  - VI. *Criterial selection technique* – selection of suitable variant based on fulfillment of the greatest number of evaluation criteria, this can be used by both decision approaches: team and individual approaches

**Table 2: Evaluation of used approach during the given phases of the decision making**

Phase of problem solving	Operation	Tactics	Strategy
Identification	b VI.	b VI.	aI./bVI.
Analysis	b VI.	b VI.	aI./bVI.
Search and creation of solution variants	a I.	b VI.	aI./bVI.
Selection of decision criteria	a I.	a I.	a I.
Selection, Decision making	a I.	a I.	a I.
Implementation of chosen decision	b VI./a I.	a I.	a I.
Control over implementation of decision	b VI.	a I.	a I.

<sup>11</sup> PAPULA, J.; PAPULOVÁ, Z. *Strategické myslenie manažérov: Za tajomstvami strategického myslenia*. Bratislava: Kartprint, 2010, p. 117-132.

### 3.5.1 Operation

As mentioned before, access issues were processed individually at the time of the occurrence and those are partially not plannable. Planning was possible solely for new workers or new software applications.

The implementation of selected solution was in second half of the observation done on team base where one assigned worker was submitting requests for each team member including all connected processes based on the information received from the particular employee. The verification and check of the newly received accesses was also done on team base where the requestor contacted the particular worker who checked the new accesses on his/her own and reported the results to the requestor. The requestor thereafter communicated the results to the responsible department. In case of a failure, the administrators from another department were working closely together with the observed department in order to remedy the detected issue.

### 3.5.2 Tactics

As concluded before, the first phases (identification, analysis, creation of solution variants) were processed on team base for the resource allocation issue. In the phase of selection criteria which are determining the choice itself as well as in the followed phases of decision making the observed manager used individual autocratic directive style of decision making. The observed manager was the only one who knew the work load of assigned workers of his team as well as the planned future work load. Due to this reason he used the individual approach for the creation of selection criteria as well as for the later phases. The implementation of chosen option like hiring of new employee, worker assignment to projects, etc. as well as the control were done on individual directive approach according to the instructions of the director.

### 3.5.3 Strategy

By the supervision of projects progress was the application of managerial methods and techniques similar to the tactics. The observed manager was informed about the current stage of each project during the discussion with each team member. During this random and irregular discussions he was informed also about alternatives of further process. The analysis as well as all later phases were mostly processed individually by the observed manager. Processing this supervision task the observed manager used his prior knowledge and experiences which he collected in his prior professional path in the role of project manager. However, a huge lack of communication was detected also in this field where the team members were not informed neither knew about all the projects processed in the department, nor about who is responsible for which project. This led to several cases of disinformation and misunderstandings. Later the workers were also demotivated as they did not see the possibility of professional growth like working with new frameworks in their employment. This led to higher worker turnover.

**Table 3: Evaluation of the used approach of problem solving during the given phases of the decision making**

Phase of problem solving	Operation	Tactics	Strategy
Identification	a	A	a
Analysis	a	A	a
Search and creation of solution variants	a	A	a
Selection of decision criteria	a	A	a
Selection, Decision making	a	A	a
Implementation of chosen decision	a	A	a
Control over implementation of decision	a	A	a

### 3.6 Evaluation of the approaches applied by the observed manager in the problem solving during the phases of the decision making

In this section, the evaluation of used types of approaches which were applied by observed manager during the execution of above mentioned tasks is presented (tab.3). Following approaches are recognize<sup>12</sup>:

- Standardized methodic procedures* applicable in given organization
- Creative approaches*

#### 3.6.1 Operation, Tactics and Strategy

The observed manager used the valid systematic methodology processes of the organizations in all fields of managerial decision making. During the whole period of performed observation the particular manager reacted to the requests of his subordinates and used the incorporated processes of given organization. A creative approach was visible solely in the area of further education of his subordinates where he reactively organized few trainings. However, it is important to state, that the reason of such an approach was used solely due to the cost saving measurements of the company. It was less expensive to make a tailored training with the instructor in the company with all team members as to send 2 or 3 team members into external company for a training on the same topic with the same instructor.

### 3.7 Evaluation of the analytic methods and techniques applied during the problem solving in the phases of the decision making

In this section, the evaluation of analytic methods and techniques which were applied by observed manager during the execution of above mentioned tasks is presented. Tab.4 shows the use of diverse techniques by observed manager by the execution of operational, tactical and strategic managerial tasks.

**Table 4: Evaluation of the used type of the analytic methods and techniques**

Phase of problem solving	Operation	Tactics	Strategy
Identification	a	d	d
Analysis	b	b	b
Search and creation of solution variants	g I.	g I.	g I.
Selection of decision criteria	h	iI.opti	iII.feas
Selection, Decision making	h	iI.opti	iII.feas
Implementation of chosen decision	n I., o I.	n I., o I.	n I., o I.
Control over implementation of decision	j II.	j II.	j II.

where *opti*, *feas* denote optimal and feasible.

Management techniques used to identify and analyze the problems:

- Occam's Razor**<sup>13</sup> - a fairly old but time proven and still currently used effective technique which presents things simplistically and does not deal uncertain details. It tries to deal with problems that concerns the particular organizational unit and not with all the problems of the organization.
- Pareto's principle**<sup>14</sup> - Principle 80 20 of the Italian economist Pareto of 19th century who found out that 80% of the wealth is in the hands of 20% of people. This rule was subsequently simplified and today this rule says that 80% of problems are caused by 20% of causes or that 20% of customers generate 80% of the revenues of the organization.

<sup>12</sup> BEŇOVÁ, E.; VÖRÖS, K.: *Zvyšovanie obchodnej výkonnosti webových stránok*. In: Digital Science Magazine [online] vol. 3, issue. 2 (2014), p. 1-3.

<sup>13</sup> BERKUN, S. *Making Things Happen: Mastering Project Management*. Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media Inc., 2006, p. 155-174.

<sup>14</sup> DELERS, A. *Pareto's principle*. Namur: Lemaitre Publishing, 50minutes, 2015. p.1-32.

- c) **Ishikawa's diagram**<sup>15</sup> - known also under the name of cause and effect diagram for analyzing of causes and consequences based on the principle of causality.
- d) **Differentiation according to the urgency of problems**<sup>16</sup> - helps to focus only on urgent problems that need to be addressed and tries not lose time by finding solutions of non-essential issues. It divides problems in following categories:
  - a. *Problems with a high degree of urgency* - need to be resolved immediately, the solution cannot be delayed. Typically, these issues have huge consequences or are completely preventing execution of tasks as such.
  - b. *Problems with a medium degree of urgency* - the development of a solution can be spread over time and planned.
  - c. *Problems with a low degree of urgency* - search for a solution may be postponed and it is sufficient to monitor only the detected problem. These problems are usually kind of uncomfortable, however, they do not represent a major obstacle in the execution of tasks.
  - d. *False alarm* - do not require solution. Those usually resolve themselves without intervention.

Management techniques used for creating variants:

- e) **The Variants Matrix (Ansoff Matrix)**<sup>17</sup> - used mainly in marketing for creation of variants based on the perception of two to three factors in the matrix.
- f) **Branched decision** - used in connection with higher number of factors, it resembles the shape of a branched tree where each branch is one solution, it allows to search for the extreme solutions.
- g) **Analogy techniques** - developing creativity:
  - I. *Personal analogy* - element solver identifies alone by himself and looks for the solutions based on of his/her experience.
  - II. *Direct analogy* - looks for similar situations in the past that generate solutions
  - III. *Symbolic analogy* - brings new perspectives as it seeks the solution in different areas
  - IV. *Fantasy analogy* - new views created based on unproven ideas.

Management techniques used for determining the criteria for solution assessment, evaluation and control of the variants:

- h) **One-criteria decision making** - application of only one criteria when by selection
- i) **Multi-criteria decision making** - decisions are based on multiple criteria
  - I. *Maximization principle* (solution which best meets criteria), *optimization* (best meets the objective function under the given criteria) and *of satisfaction* (it is not looking for the best option, but takes the first solution meeting the criteria)
  - II. *Principle of feasibility* (feasibility solutions), *acceptance* (solution fulfilling the objectives of the organization) and *vulnerability* (considers risks of solutions)
  - III. *Principle of intuition, methodical recommendations and opinions derived from defined goals and objectives*
- j) **Comparison:**
  - I. *Comparing with past results*
  - II. *Comparing with planned results*
  - III. *Comparing with results of other organizational units*
  - IV. *Comparing with prescriptive standards*

#### V. Comparing with the hypothetical situation

- k) **decision matrix**
- l) **decision-making board**
- m) **assessment of the alternative solutions using differentiated weights selected request**

Management techniques used to implement decisions and to monitor their realization:

- n) **Leadership style**
  - I. *Autocratic*
  - II. *Participative*
  - III. *Democratic*
- o) **Decision-making style**
  - I. *individual* (analytical, prescriptive, conceptual, behavioral)
  - II. *group* (brainstorming, Delphi method, a formal technique (silent) group, the method of matching cards paired technology selection, criterial decision-making)

### 3.7.1 Operation

At the beginning of the observation an interest in the problems of other line managers in the same position was detected by the observed manager. He advised and taught them how to do which tasks if he did have the necessary know-how. He shared his knowledge with others where most of them were new managers. At the end of the observation, the situation changed and the observed manager did care solely about issues that concerned him or his team. Here we can conclude that he used the Occam's razor technique in operation. However, there may be several reasons for this change and the most probable may be the lack of time and too much responsibility in view of the constantly growing number of team members. The second reason may be sense of power and the reason that he had to find out the processes for yourself and wanted others to have to walk the same difficult path full of obstacles. Whatever the reasons may be, the observed manager started to address solely problems under his responsibility concerning his team of what we can conclude him using the Occam's razor.

For the analysis of actual issues the observed manager applied the Pareto's principle at all levels of urgency. Though the analysis he assessed the most likely causes of the encountered issues and he tried to solve those first. The use of Pareto's principle was applicable to all areas of managerial decision (operation, tactics, strategy). The reason of the use of this principle may also lie in the lack of time and higher amount of issues due to too many team members.

The observed manager applied the analogy technique of variant formation. The need of accesses and their requesting was although different for each kind of access, however, all of them were similar in the view of the process steps.

At the selection step of the decision making the observed manager used one-criteria selection with regard to the possibility of access and rights associated with it.

In the implementation phase the manager observed applied the same leadership style at all levels which was the autocratic, directive leadership style. He conducted the decision always by himself and ordered the chosen implementation, which he subsequently inspected and compared with planned results. Here it is necessary to state that the observed manager essentially and mechanically executed the instructions of his superior and that at such a position shall be a person who is able to independently manage and decide and reduce the work load of their superiors on such a way as they are responsible for several teams.

### 3.7.2 Tactics and Strategy

As previously mentioned, the observed manager always applied differentiation of issues according to their urgency and priority. He tackled the issues which were in turn from the more urgent to less significant. The most probable cause may be the fact that

<sup>15</sup> KERN, J. *Ishikawa Diagramme - Ursache-Wirkungs-Diagramme*. Norderstedt: GRIN Verlag, 2008, p. 1-32.

<sup>16</sup> PAPULA, J.; PAPULOVÁ, Z. *Manažerske rozhodovanie: Prístupy a postupy*. Bratislava: Kartprint, 2014, p. 94-96.

<sup>17</sup> SILBIGER, S. A. *The Ten-Day MBA 4th Ed.: A Step-by-Step Guide to Mastering the Skills Taught In America's Top Business Schools*. New York: HarperBusiness, 2012, p. 337-338.

without their solution those issues either stopped all production of the entire company or the particular department (personnel could not work) and did not meet its objectives.

As the noted above the observed manager applied the Pareto's principle in the analysis. In the phase of creation of the selection criteria the observed manager applied various techniques depending on the area of the relevant issue. Addressing issues related to tactics or strategy the observed manager diversified his criteria and conducted the election according to several criteria (multi-criteria decision-making). Solving the allocation of labor he took into account the assigned workload, experience of the worker with the particular technology, etc. While dealing with project deadlines he considered the importance of the project reflected, its urgency, number of workers and departments involved, project funding and costs, etc. Due to the fact that the observed manager did not sought for several solutions and was mostly satisfied with one or two solutions; we can conclude that he was guided by the principle of feasibility and by the principle of an appropriate optimization in the phase of determination of selection criteria. In the field of tactics, the observed manager tried to choose the optimal solution to the problem in view of existing labor resources of his team and considering the needs of the project itself. In strategic area the observed manager applied the principle of feasibility and focused on feasibility of project deadlines under the given circumstances.

In the implementation phase, as already mentioned above, observed manager conducted followed the same procedure at all levels which was the autocratic directive style of leadership.

### 3.8 Evaluation of methods and techniques applied by observed manager during the solution of a given and a similar problem

The table below (tab.5) shows the assessment of the effectiveness of methods and approaches to address mentioned challenges and problems of a similar type. At the same time, concrete consequences are outlined resulting from the application of selected methods and approaches.

For the indication of the consequences of applied methods and approaches, following symptoms were included:

- a) **Financial results**
- b) **Competitiveness** (comparative advantage)
- c) **Possibility of success**
- d) **Assurance of conditions for carrying out work**
- e) **Assurance of the implementation** (realizing, of the embodiment) **of individual work tasks**

**Table 5: Evaluation of consequences of applied methods and techniques**

Phase of problem solving	Operation	Tactics	Strategy
Identification	d	e	a
Analysis	d	e	a
Search and creation of solution variants	d	e	a
Selection of decision criteria	d	e	a
Selection, Decision making	d	e	a
Implementation of chosen decision	d	e	a
Control over implementation of decision	d	e	a

#### 3.8.1 Operation

During the solving of issues in operational field of management, the assurance of appropriate working conditions for executing workers (d) denoted a necessity as without the accesses the workers were not able to process their tasks which very soon gets visible also in the remaining spheres e), b), c) and a).

#### 3.8.2 Tactics

With the execution of tactical tasks the observed manager ensured the processing of individual projects and individual

working tasks e). Through hiring of new qualified and experienced workers he not only worked towards the improvement of comparative advantage of the company b) but also towards the increase of the comparative advantage of the particular department within the company itself c). Analyzing all the effects connected to the execution of given tactic tasks, that the significantly aimed goal was the execution of working tasks as such e).

#### 3.8.3 Strategy

Achieving project deadlines was mostly mirrored in the financial results from the point of view of the observed manager a). The financial results were significantly influenced by delayed product delivery deviating from the set deadlines when the company representatives were dealing with the client regarding price change and cuts whereas the production costs of that particular product are continuously increasing. The evaluation of the department depends on financial balance, performance and on the success of its products in the market at the same time c).

### 3.9 Improvement proposal of the application of the managerial methods and techniques applied by observed manager and the final evaluation

In this chapter a proposal of options for improvement of the applied managerial methods and techniques by observed manager shall be found. It shall help to improve addressing those challenges and problems of a similar type in the various stages of the decision making process as well as the possibility of the use of other approaches, procedures, methods and techniques in decision process. The following indications can be found in the table below:

- a) *Satisfaction with the applied procedures*
- b) *Need for improvement of decision-making*

**Table 6: Evaluation of the monitored consequences of applied managerial methods and techniques**

Phase of problem solving	Operation	Tactics	Strategy
Identification	a	a	a
Analysis	a	b	b
Search and creation of solution variants	b	b	b
Selection of decision criteria	b	a	a
Selection, Decision making	b	a	a
Implementation of chosen decision	b	b	b
Control over implementation of decision	b	b	b

From the analysis of the observed object solely a very limited satisfaction with the application of managerial methods and techniques in various stages of problem solving in all areas of management can be deduced. It is essential to improve the application of new managerial methods and techniques in all areas in the last three stages.

Using of Occam's razor and Pareto's principle is very effective, but not sufficient in carrying out management functions. It is important to be interested in occurring problems and trying to systematically eliminate them by anticipating and better control instead of extinguishing fires.

Similarly, the categorization of problems according to the urgency is commendable but not sufficient. It is not enough just to solve problems that involve insurmountable obstacle in the execution of working tasks. It is necessary to address issues systematically in order to prevent their future occurrence and to establish a systematic solution for workers who could perform found solutions by themselves and would therefore reduce the work load of a manager.

Despite of the fact, that the observed manager was in charge of managerial position for the first time, and joined to it relative shortly before the actual start of the observation, it is necessary to point out insufficient skills of chosen person for the

responsibilities and role of the managerial function which he was not able to perform independently even at the end of the observation what represents a relatively long term. There is an urgent need to develop skills in management areas such as strategic thinking, leading, planning, organization and control. Under the supportive leading of the director he partially developed his skills and during the time of exposure at this position he gained experience and self-confidence, but was still lacking of independence even after such a long time.

Of all the ways of thinking the observed manager used so far only intuition and mechanical thinking. It would be appropriate to apply strategic thinking and to focus first on the introduction of systematic procedures for dealing with constantly emerging problems of the same type and on the prevention of these problems.

One of the most important factors of unsuccessful implementation of management functions is autocratic prescriptive style of leadership, which is perceived by his assigned staff as power demonstration and does not give workers the opportunity for personal growth. This style of leadership is the most intolerant approach towards new creativity and differences in personalities of individual employees. It would be appropriate to apply democratic or team (group) decision making of problem solving.

The evaluation approach currently used is apparent of stiffness and rigidity from the view of team members. It would be appropriate to introduce new creative approaches to work organization, for example by introducing new project management methodologies such as agile methods, and new ways of working, such as pair-programming, etc. That would represent a good addition to Occam's razor, Pareto's principle and the division of problems according to urgency that manager inadvertently applied. The introduction of Ishikawa's diagram could pinpoint the causes of problems and thus help to prevent them.

In the search for and development of solution alternatives it would be appropriate to seek multiple solutions and create branched opportunities. In the phase of evaluation of possible solutions it would be appropriate to establish a multi-criteria evaluation and strive for maximization principle and not to implement just the first practical option that seems as a satisfied solution.

The analysis of the application of managerial methods and techniques by observed manager was significantly influenced by his ignorance of relevant methodologies and techniques due to the lack of managerial education. If the observed manager would show interest he could fill out his gaps very fast as the organization provided an entire database of books and trainings to their employees free of charge and even outside the workplace where sufficient number of managerial literature, trainings and courses were included. Another option would be to fill out the gaps by professional managerial education where he would gather large boundless of missing the knowledge of possible managerial practices, techniques and procedures as well as their consequences in all areas of management. This education can be also in form of e-learning inside the organization.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4 Conclusion

In this paper, the analysis of application of managerial methods, techniques, and procedures used by a selected manager from business practice was studied.

According to the results of research carried out, it is necessary to state that some management methods and techniques were unwittingly used by the observed employee in the position of a

line manager without him absolving managerial education before. Although he used solely very simple managerial methods and techniques, those are very effective (e.g. Occam's razor, Pareto's principle, multi-criteria decision making, etc.).

However, it is necessary to state that the observed manager was lacking the use of managerial techniques and methods in many management areas such as strategic thinking and leadership. It is strongly advisable for companies, to fill managerial positions with skilled well educated people who are better prepared for the managerial function and to continue with the professional managerial development of management employees.

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