

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND EFFICIENCY OF PROFESSIONAL SALES MANAGERS

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## Abstract

The relevance of psychological follow-up of economic processes is determined by growing interest in the human factor influence on the socioeconomic efficiency improvement. Labor psychology has well-proven the obvious link between motivation and success of the expert work.

The aim of the study was to determine the influence of personal qualities of sales managers on the economic effectiveness and professional success. Professional success is understood as the optimal combination of personal and professional achievements which correspond to the quality standards. The diagnostic instrumentarium is represented by two groups of techniques. The first group includes such methodologies for assessing personal qualities as "Locus of Control" offered by Julian B. Rotter, "Motivational profile" by Sheila Ritchie and Peter Martin; "The Motivation to Success" by T. Ehlers; "The Motivation to Avoid Failure" by T. Ehlers. Second group includes methods of economic efficiency. The study proves that those managers who possess external locus of control have higher level of professional efficiency. They have the motivation to be recognized and this fact has a positive impact on their overall economic efficiency. However, their focus on the outcome has a negative effect on the results of personal achievements.

**Keywords:** motivation, economic efficiency, personal orientation, professional effect, external locus.

**JEL Code:** J 24, J 28

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## Introduction

The increase of professional activity effectiveness is a complex, multifunctional phenomenon, which is of scientific interest in the spheres of sociology, psychology and economics. The economic crisis experienced by the Russian economy has resulted in the

problem of the reduction of professional efficiency of sales specialists and sales managers working in trade companies of various levels and specializations in particular. It is well-known that success in trade largely depends not on the commodity, but on the seller, his professional skills and motivation.

Scientists from all over the world recognize that manager's professional effectiveness stands for some particular quality indicators, which are the result of rational use of organizational and personal resources (Buble, Juras, Matic, 2014). Being an integral socio-psychological characteristic, the professional resource of the personality includes components, which are necessary for successful work. Among them are professional competencies and motivation, which determine both the internal and external types of activity of the individual (Teoh, KRH., Coyne, I., Devonish, D., Leather, P., Zarola, A. 2016). Professional competencies as the ability of an employee to perform his duties in accordance with the specified standards begin to form in the process of learning and are mastered during the working process. Professional motivation is a combination of factors and processes, which induce and motivate the individual to successfully accomplish the tasks and to achieve the desired goals. Moreover, professional motivation is a result of work and the outcome of its internal and external evaluation (Dushkov, 2005). Thus, motivation is a leading factor of professional development. If it is high enough, it becomes possible to effectively continue professional education and develop personal culture (Vilnius, 1996). The research of the problem of motivation and professional effectiveness is primarily connected with the analysis of human activity sources, motivating sources of professional activity and constructive behavior in the workplace. Positive motivation of the manager is associated with the positive working environment and client-oriented sale respectively. Negative motivation, in its turn, is associated with emotional exhaustion (Kemp, Borderls and Ricks, 2013).

Linking the employees' motivation with the effectiveness of their activities, it is important to identify the parameters of the evaluation. It is necessary to understand (1) whether the employee's activities correspond with the organizational goals and specified requirements; (2) whether the work is done with the help of the most rational and efficient methods; (3) whether the worker's abilities (knowledge, skills, etc.) are used to their maximum (Babenko, 2000).

## **1 Materials and methods**

The study involved 30 sales managers working in a developing trading company, located in Nizhny Tagil. These are 15 men and 15 women of the average age of 26, who have less than five years of working experience.

Among the research methods are a survey, an expert interview and analysis of professional effectiveness. The researchers have also used such techniques as Motivation to Succeed and Failure Avoidance Motivation by T. Ehlers, Motivation Profile by Sh. Richey and P. Martin, Subjective Locus of Control by J. Rotter. For the statistical processing of the data obtained, a one-way ANOVA analysis was used. This method was developed by R. Fisher to analyze the results of experimental studies, aimed at finding dependencies in experimental data by investigating the significance of differences in mean values.

## 2 Results

At the first stage, the researchers surveyed seven senior executives, who supervised the sales managers involved in the experiment. The results of the expert survey made it possible to divide young specialists into three groups. The first group made 23.3 % of all the participants and included highly effective managers, who had the highest economic indicators and regularly received interest from the profit. The second group (40%) included managers, who performed their job well but had no extra income, and, so far, demonstrated the average level of economic effectiveness. The third group (36.7%) included managers, who failed to fulfill economic tasks and had problems with their clients and deadlines for accomplishing their goals. These managers were a group of low-effective specialists. Self-evaluation of professional activity effectiveness showed the following results (Table 1):

**Table 1 - Self-Evaluation of Managers' Professional Activity Effectiveness**

Level of Effectiveness	%	Number of Managers Involved in the Experiment
High level	27	8
Intermediate level	73	22
Low level	0	0

Thus, most of the managers involved in the experiment considered themselves to belong to the group of specialists with an average level of efficiency of 73% (22 people). 27% of managers (8 people) referred themselves to the group of highly effective specialists. Nobody considered himself to belong to the group of specialists with low level of professionalism.

The discrepancy in the results of professional effectiveness evaluation made by the experts and the managers indicates that there is an inadequate approach to the analysis of the results of

one's own professional skills, lack of clear criteria and markers of professionalism and effectiveness of managers of a trading company.

At the next stage, the searchers analyzed the results of the diagnostics of personality motivation. Psychological research of sales managers demonstrated that most of them strive for success (Table 2).

**Table 2. The Indicators of Motivation to Achieve Success. Motivation to Succeed technique by T. Ehlers**

Scale	Level	%	Number of Managers Involved in the Experiment	Level of Professional Effectiveness
Motivation to achieve success	Low	3.3	1	100% low
	Average	23.3	7	100% average
	Moderately high	50	15	33.3% average 66.6% low
	High	23.3	7	100% high

Analyzing the results of Table 2, it can be said that 50% of the managers involved in the experiment demonstrate moderately high level of motivation to achieve success. Young professionals prefer an average level of risk. They are focused on success and on the achievement of the specified goals. They strive to perform the work at the highest level. High level of motivation to succeed is expressed in 23.3% of participants (7 people). According to the expert opinion, these managers belong to the group of highly-effective employees, who have a high level of readiness for risk. They are motivated to succeed, to achieve their goals and prefer to work hard to get results. The average level of motivation to succeed was demonstrated by 23.3% of participants (7 people). In the opinion of the experts, all of them are motivated to succeed and are ready to work hard to achieve their goals within the reasonable risk level. Only 4 % of participants (1 person) demonstrated low level of motivation to achieve success. The manager has great hope to succeed, but does little to make it happen. For such specialists, success has no importance. This experiment participant belongs to the group of inefficient employees and has the lowest level of economic efficiency.

**Tab. 3. The Indicators of Motivation to Avoid Managers' Failures. Motivation to Avoid Failures technique by T. Ehlers**

Scale	Level	%	Number of Managers Involved in the Experiment	Level of Professional Effectiveness
Failure Avoidance Motivation	Low	7	2	100% high
	Average	33	10	50% high, 50% average
	Moderately high	40	12	58.3% average, 41.7% low
	High	20	6	100% low

The results of Table 3 indicate that 40% of the managers (12 people) involved in the experiment are highly motivated to avoid failures. These people are not focused on the achievement of success; all efforts they make are aimed only at avoiding failures. The highest level of motivation is demonstrated by 20% of participants (6 people), who belong to the group of low-effective employees. They are also not oriented to succeed; they are driven by the fear of failure and all their activities are aimed at avoiding them. If such specialists are to take responsibility and to overcome obstacles, they are more likely to fail with the task completion. 33% of participants (10 people) have the average motivation to avoid failures. These managers are ready to take risk, though they think about possible failures and try to avoid them. Their success depends on their faith in themselves and their abilities. Only 7% of managers under experiment (2 people) have low motivation to avoid failures. These people belong to the group of highly-effective employees, who do not think about possible failures and in greater degree count on their success. According to the methodics offered by J. Rotter, which allows to determine the origin of responsibility for one's activities (or in other words to determine whether the results of activities depend on external forces or internal, or personal, efforts and abilities), most of the managers involved in the study have internal locus of control.

Analysis of motivational profiles of the workers with different level of professional effectiveness and locus of control allow to come to the conclusion that personality motivators

differ from each other both from the point of their substantive and quantitative characteristics, which might be the reason for professional success.

Thus, for managers, belonging to the group of highly professional employees (7 people) the key motivators for the activity are: 1) High income (37.2 points). They are motivated by the reward and the opportunity to have a job with a good salary and bonuses. 2) Creativity (36.8 points). The employees feel the need to invent, to create, to act in a non-standard way. 3) Self-improvement (35.8 points). This motivator speaks of the high need for professional growth and personal development, as well as of the desire to study and improve personal potential. 4) Strive for achievement (32.3 points). This motivator indicates the need to set challenging goals and to achieve them. These managers have internal locus of control as the dominant one.

For managers from the group of average effectiveness (12 people) the motivating factors are: 1) Interesting and useful work (38.3 points). This motivator stands for the need for recognition and importance, completion of work, which brings satisfaction. 2) Recognition (35.8). It stands for the need of recognition from the side of other people, so that the others could recognize and appreciate achievements and successes. 3) Diversity and challenges (34.9 points). This motivator presupposes the need for diversity, changes, stimulation, desire to avoid routine and boredom. 4) Structuring (32.6 points). It is the need for a clear structuring, the availability of the feedback and information, which help to evaluate the results of the work. These managers' dominant locus of control is the external one.

The third group of managers (11 people) with low level of effectiveness are characterized by the following leading motivators of activity: 1) Social contacts (37.5 points). It stands for the need in social contacts, confidential communication with a wide range of people, establishing close, friendly relationship with colleagues. 2) Physical conditions of work (30.1 points). This is the need for good working conditions and comfortable atmosphere. 3) Relationships (28.3 points). It is the need to form and to maintain long-term stable relationship, a small number of colleagues, a significant degree of proximity of relationships, trust. 4) Power and influence (24.9 points). This motivator stands for the need to have power and influence over others, the desire to lead, the persevering strive for competition. These managers' dominant locus is the external locus of control.

To prove the hypothesis of the relationship of motivation and professional effectiveness of sales managers, the researchers conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The calculations' results helped to define that the strive for achievements ( $p=0.603$ ) and specific professional achievements are the key statistics criteria in the expert evaluation. Recognition

( $p=0.588$ ) or the evaluation of the employee by the supervisor is a leading criterion for self-evaluation.

## Conclusion

The conducted research allowed to prove the hypothesis about the relationship of personal motivation with the professional effectiveness of sales managers.

The results of the study allow to make the following recommendations. To motivate the staff with an average level of professional effectiveness during the crisis period and to take the need for recognition into account, it is necessary:

- to provide the systematic evaluation of the work done and to praise the worker when the job is done well;
- to recognize the contribution of the employee publicly during forums, meetings and workshops;
- to create opportunities to share work successes with others through presentations, reports;
- to offer the employees extra bonuses for a well-done job.

For employees with a low level of professional efficiency, the following methods of motivation can be used:

- to set foreseeable and achievable goals, which are relevant and highly appreciated;
- to provide an opportunity for independent work;
- to offer employees opportunities for training, improving their skills and knowledge through trainings, knowledge-refreshment courses;
- to give tasks, which can be completed by employees; in the other case, the failure will demotivate them.

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