

# PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS IN MANAGER'S ACTIVITIES

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An article „ Psychological stress on activities of manager” is focused on stress and stressful situations, that a manager is experiencing the possibilities of their managing.

Survey of psychological stress of managers was made at a Tesco store SR a.s. and its results are presented in the article.

**K e y w o r d s.** Manager's personality, psychologival stress, manager, stress, coping.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Mental load and stress are inseparable part of manager's work and they are part of the everyday routine as well. The source of the load may be a lot of different situations, events, circumstances and barriers. We require from the manager to make very quick decisions and flexible thinking. Stress, which is manager experiencing at work can cause the beginning of discovering the psychological and physiological symptoms of stress. In this unfavorable situation a person cannot survive long and it is important to pay attention to different methods of coping with stress.

The article describes the manager's personality, its typical characteristics, psychological stress, mental load and types of stress behavior, sources of work-related stress and ability of managing that. The last part of article describes research made of many information, which were find out during the research.

## 2 MANAGER'S PERSONALITY

The word of personality has many definitions, I will mention one, written by Tardy and it says: "Personality is the individual human unity, it is the unity of the intellectual properties and processes based on the unity of the body and creating and manifesting in its social relations." (1)

Managers have very important position in society, because they affect the activities and results. We are not born as managers, the question

is whether we can handle this role, this job or not. There are many different managers in organizations, and all of them face the same problems, try to achieve certain goals and activities of many of the same procedures apply effective management. Manager should understand people and perceive them according to that negotiate with them, should act motivationally with the informal power of authority. Manager affects the daily life of people, improves performance, work quality, customer satisfaction and creates an atmosphere of comfort and peace. And because of that one of the managerial functions is the role of leader. Therefore, a manager should have a strength, power of personality and charisma. (2)

There are several features that are essential for good management work: (3)

- to be able to decide,
- to know how to manage,
- to have the pleasure of managerial work,
- to work with people, to have an interest in this work,
- to be able to communicate, to listen and to be more extraverted,
- to be vital,
- to be resistant to stress,
- to be creative,
- to have imagination and fantasy,
- to be flexible and adaptable, to be able to adapt to changes,
- to have a sense of humor,
- to work on yourself and self-development,
- to have a moral responsibility,
- to be willing to work hard,
- to have analytical skills,
- to have an ability to understand people,

- to have the ability to spot an opportunity,
- to have the ability to deal with unpleasant situations and taking risks,
- to be enterprising,
- to be able to enforce adequately, but the ethical rules,
- to be independent, but also to be able to ask for help if necessary
- to be able to keep the promises,
- to be accurate,
- to be able to save time, not only his but the time of other people as well,
- to feel responsible for the mistakes of their department or company and to try to fix them,
- to be able to learn from their mistakes and not repeat them.

## 2.1 Mental load of the manager

The inseparable part of every manager's work are traces of unpleasant tension, fatigue, tempers, irritability. Sometimes, he must join his forces in order to be able to cope with all this.

Power and performance of manager or employee are often influenced by maladaptive psychological states, which are classified by psychological stress, frustration and stress. Such conditions usually occur in the actual work as a result of external and internal conflict situations, which a person finds unbearable or not affected. We can say that there are some signals of mental disturbance of balance. Maladaptive psychological states, in most cases occur in the fields of management and leadership and are reflected in the ability of managers to manage professional-level non-standard work situation or conflict.(4)

Stress situations can lead to psychological or physiological changes that are characteristic symptoms. The psychological symptoms can include anxiety, insecurity, depression, helplessness, isolation, distraction, anger, and anger others. We include headache, neck or back pain, increase physical pressure, rapid

breathing, nausea, indigestion, diarrhea, weight changes, sweating, and others among physical situations. Stress often affects many situations, when a manager may have difficulty in interpersonal relationships, does not control their emotions, he is irritable, aggressive and vice versa.

The literature is divided into three phases, which are also essential components of the operation of psychological stress: (5)

- Phase 1 - mobilization of psychical forces,
- Phase 2 - active solution (solution of stress situation),
- Phase 3 - solution load or failure.

## 2.2 Stress

The term stress was first introduced in medicine in the context of research that took place in 1939, a Canadian scientist Hans Selye, who had Hungarian origin, and it meant an excessive load or effort. (6)

We can say about stress that it is difficult stressful situation, in which is an extraordinary activation extraordinary self-regulatory system very necessary. This is a strong pressure, which alters the psychological and physiological conditions of man. It may have different duration and intensity. (4)

Stress is manifested by changes in behavior, which one is aware. The only question is how fast you can understand what depends on personal characteristics and mechanisms of man.

The most distinguishing types of stress behavior are: (7)

- Open aggressive behavior - a quick verbal or physical assault, which is created by stress with an intention to its elimination. Open aggression may not be directed only to persons or events that are caused by, but is often focused on those present persons.
- Indirectly aggressive behavior - searching for indirect forms of compensation with stress, an example can be slander, gossip, manipulation and so on.

- Passive aggressive behavior - conflict occurs inside a person, because it is inside the person, enters as nervousness, irritability, restlessness. Sometimes there is even a permanent change in mental status.

Manager should be able to recognize stress inside himself and in his subordinates.

Symptoms of stress can be physiological (sweats, fatigue), cognitive (reducing the accuracy of perception, the perception of negative changes in social environment), affective (mood changes, insecurity, anger), behavioral (motor disorders, disorientation, indecisiveness). (8)

As mentioned earlier, some degrees of stress are important in life, even essential. It is not stress as stress that it is necessary to distinguish what kind of stress is working on us at the moment. Selye differentiates: (9)

- eustress - the emotional impact of stress is positive, such as upcoming promotions at work. Eustress is a challenge, the incentives for growth and positive development. The prefix eu-comes from the Greek language and it means fair condition.
- distress - a negative emotional tension, accompanied by adverse or negative situations, such as loss of job, duties or employment, bankruptcy and so on. The prefix di- means unreasonable condition, discomfort and disorder.

### 2.3 Working stress sources

There are various and numerous sources of stress in the workplaces to which the manager or the organization must cope, although it is not easy. Cooper and Marshall proposed a model according to which sources of work stress are incorporated into six basic categories: (10)

- Internal factors of work - including qualitative and

quantitative work overload, bad physical working conditions, incorrectly allocated work environment, different work load requirements, traveling, long hours, new technologies, and risk or danger.

- Position in the organization – not clear and not understandable determination of work functions and features contradiction degree of responsibility for others.
- Working relationships - many researches concluded that psychological sense of support and confidence of colleagues and peers is a powerful determinant of well being. Bad relations in the workplace can be a direct source of stress, and affect the development of supportive relationships that play a mediating role of stress or shock stress.
- Career Development - This category includes concepts such as promotion, reassignment to a lower position, uncertain employment future, reach the top of the career or early retirement.
- Organizational structure and the working environment - there are stressors, generally described as factors related to being in the organization and its culture (e.g., incompatible management style, lack of feedback, participation and effective consultation, the very lack of communication).
- Linking home - work - a potential source of stress, if both partners are planning a career in employment, or couples who have experienced financial problems or life crises.

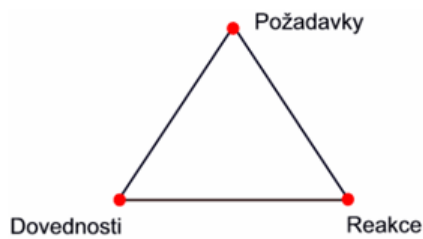
### 2.4 Coping

If the manager wants to fight successfully with stress it is very important knowledge that is inside him and identifies its causes. Then he can choose the right strategy of coping.

There are three peaks of stress of management triangle represent the

interconnection between elements of coping with stress management: (11)

- 1 Requirements - refer to stressful load for the manager or managers and members and we divide it to working, family and personal needs. To match the job requirements of all the stressors associated with work environment, but also time pressure, travel, problems with disgruntled employees, conflicts at work and so on. Family demands are related to the life of the manager and there are financial problems, need to pay attention to children and the partner. Personal requirements are those set by manager to himself, for example: perfect preparation for the meeting, one hundred percent complete task and so on.
- 2 Skills - we include techniques and skills that are used for coping with stress. It is a variety of managerial and interpersonal techniques (time management, goal setting, use of information technology, etc.). Also, there is emotional intelligence, which means the ability to understand their own feelings and consciousness. And finally there are a variety of movement, relaxation and relaxation techniques.
- 3 Reactions - the finally and the resulting reactions are combination of frequencies, severity and urgency of requirements that are imposed upon him, and his abilities and skills to confront and cope with stress load.



Coping is managing difficult situations defines different methods of coping with

stress.

Suitable methods include: proven methods based on knowledge from psychology (coping with anxiety, fear, anger, aggressiveness, etc.) Method associated with self-knowledge and self-control, physical, breathing and relaxation exercises and meditation, practice reinforcing the meaningfulness of our lives, shaping higher values and interests, the change in incentive system; procedures increasing level of visibility, accuracy and strength of our beliefs that lead to health or stress. (12)

## 2.5 The first aid in stressful situation

The body of a person who came to the stressful situation at the neurophysiological mechanism level mobilizes matters that cause aggression or escape. Our social environment, cultural traditions and other commitments do not allow us to escape or aggression. In such a situations of excessive stress decreases performance and the body suffers. The experience and wisdom of people summarizes the whole range of knowledge and how to proceed in such a situation. (13)

Nine first aids in stress: (14)

- anti-stress breathing,
- short relaxation,
- concentration,
- "go and stay a while alone,"
- change of an activity,
- relaxing music,
- conversation with someone else,
- counting,
- exercises.

## 3. SURVEY

I chose a questionnaire survey (the sample of questionnaire is attached in the part A of this thesis. By means of using this method I am trying to get to the answers to my questions chosen and arranged, subject to the problem area of mental load manager.

In agreement with the company's employees who are working in the office of the

director of one of the business units, all the managers at the three selected plants to fill in an anonymous written questionnaire that is used to obtain the necessary information. During the specified period, these managers have the opportunity to complete a questionnaire and submit it to the collection point (agency director). Returning of questionnaires was 87%. The next section provides the information and comments on them.

The questionnaire is completed by a total of 26 employees who work in managerial positions at Tesco. The survey had very positive response from employees and it researched the issue has been considerable interesting.

In areas relating to the properties and characteristics which should have the right manager, the respondents showed that they have. Up to 22 of 26 managers confirmed that they have properties as determination and ability to manage, which is probably the most important and most basic of management. The high number of managers identified the properties as: communication skills, ability to listen, moral responsibility, creativity, analytical skills and flexibility. The smallest number of responses to the option that says and asked the help of others, suggesting that these managers are more independent

The stress and mental stress and issues related to this, I can say that managers often experience a really mental challenging situations and exalted situations. Up to 85% of them say that experience stress situations often. As the most common symptoms mentioned in particular the burden

of anger, annoyance, distraction, anxiety and uncertainty. The physiological symptoms that occur most frequently include headache, sweating and increased physical pressure. Most managers are fully aware of when getting into a situation of stress and trying to deal with it, although quite a lot of managers said that they dealt with stressful situations and consumption of tobacco and alcohol. The general population is not a problem.

Empirical research also showed that managers of Tesco face with time pressure

and stress of too in many tasks. Quite often they also stress affects the chaotic organization of work, or of disturbed interpersonal relationships. In the area of work versus family, one half of managers do not feel the problem, the other half feels the conflict - family fights.

For first aid in situations of stress is considered most managers talk with someone else, they have time for themselves and they exercise. They use the short physical relaxation and counting.

The survey showed the need to improve interpersonal relationships, because 38% of managers said that they faced with stress, which caused human relationships are undermined. The changes should take place and managers who use inappropriate methods of coping with stress, because these are only temporary, do not solve the underlying problem and made the only escape from reality. Negativity, which was found in the research is the fact that managers feel the stress of a chaotic patterns. I can only guess that this is probably due to "bad management carried out" who stands above them.

Although managers face the stress basically every day, good news is the fact that 20 of the 26 respondents love their work and are happy with it, although they experience stress in it. Mental load is simply the work of a manager who is close to this fact and he can handle it.

#### 4. CLOSURE

Managing people is very difficult task that requires a lot of force, some selected properties of a mentally strong person who also has the insight and is empathetic to himself. Dealing with stressful situations is individual for every manager, because every person is different and each manager deals with stress "after him."

Analysis and interpretation of knowledge acquired research methods used showed that in the research showed that the work of manager brings mental load and stress to him. Employees

of Tesco Store SR working in managing positions at work and experiencing a stressful situation and then created a negative psychological and physiological manifestations of stress. Nevertheless, they are satisfied with their work.

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