

**II International Scientific Conference GCPMED 2019
"Global Challenges and Prospects of the Modern Economic Development"****METHODOLOGICAL BASIS DEVELOPMENT FOR TRAINING
PROVIDER CHOICE: EXPERIENCE OF RUSSIAN PRACTICE**

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the problem of choosing a training provider in the educational services market. This problem is relevant today in the framework of the formation of conceptual approaches to the development and implementation of human resources development strategies in the context of the digital economy. The number of training companies and trainers is growing every year, which complicates the choice of the most worthy ones that meet customer requirements. The number of domestic training companies offering western teaching methods and technologies for solving business problems is increasing, which does not correspond to Russian realities. In this regard, the goal of our study was to develop methodological foundations for the selection of an educational services provider, to which we include educational companies and independent trainers. The results of the study were based on the study of domestic and foreign scientific literature on the planning and organization of corporate training as a system, analysis of best practices for developing staff development strategies. The study used methods of quantitative, qualitative and logical analysis. Monitoring the Russian training and consulting market, studying the experience of domestic companies' practices in the selection and conclusion of business cooperation agreements with educational institutions and business trainers allowed the authors to obtain reliable research results and formulate reasonable conclusions.

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Keywords: Universal competencies (soft skills), educational services provider, trainer, compulsory and developing training, professional development of staff.



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1. Introduction

The rapid development of digitalization and the introduction of information technology significantly accelerated the process of updating information and knowledge. Today, knowledge is updated in industries such as economics and management, engineering and information technology, in less than three years. In the labor market, universal employees with developed soft skills are becoming more and more popular (Simonova, Ilyukhina, Romantsev, Khamatnurov, & Zeer, 2016). In this regard, the modern generation of leaders of the «Digital Economy» program has been tasked with ensuring the process of continuous development of its personnel through training, advanced training, professional training and retraining (Mekhdiev, 2018; Makhmudova, Ilyukhina, & Bogatyreva, 2019).

As part of the formation of conceptual approaches to the development and implementation of human resource development strategies, one of the urgent is the problem of choosing a training provider. This issue is especially acute today, in the context of the development of digital technologies, when the importance of developing training aimed at the formation of supra-professional competencies: communication and management skills is growing. In these conditions, the number of training companies and freelance trainers offering their services, but sometimes with a negative reputation, whose activities do not meet the quality requirements, is increasing in the educational services market. Therefore, the development of a methodology for choosing an educational services provider is, in our opinion, necessary, both in terms of its regulation and control, and in order to ensure the quality of developmental events.

2. Problem Statement

The analysis of domestic and foreign scientific research, articles and monographs on the topic of professional development speaks of a substantive study of both theoretical and practical issues of planning and organizing staff training. The issues of the development of corporate training systems have been studied quite deeply (Ilyukhina, Bogatyreva, Makhmudova, & Ermakova, 2019); identified the problems of personnel training in the context of digitalization (Mekhdiev, 2018); the advantages of innovative teaching methods are analyzed (Ignatieva, 2018); the practical experience of companies in organizing employee training is widely covered (Vorotyntseva & Nedelin, 2008; Chulanova & Timchenko, 2016; Soloviev, 2018). Foreign scientists have deeply studied the issues of androgogy, as an independent science of adult education; determined the conditions for the practical implementation of successful adult education (Knowles, 1988); methods have been developed to evaluate the effectiveness of employee training (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2007). However, in our opinion, in domestic practice, as part of the development of personnel development strategies, the weak link is the question of choosing a training provider. The lack of a unified methodology for choosing a provider of educational services increases the time of its search and selection, reduces the quality of the selection process, which sometimes leads to poor learning outcomes.

3. Research Questions

In the context of the development of the digital economy, due to the correct integration of technological solutions into the life of employees, constant and high-quality training becomes a reality.

Primitive and typical work is outsourced, and company employees are required new skills to solve non-trivial tasks – emotional intelligence, flexibility, synthetic thinking, strong-willed and intellectual competencies, developed digital literacy. Teachers of corporate training centers, as a rule, cannot ensure the development of relevant competencies, so the issue of finding and attracting external training providers is an acute issue.

In this regard, the subject of our study is issues related to the development of methodological approaches for choosing a provider of educational services, to which we include training companies and independent trainers. Despite the fact that attention is paid to this issue in the literature, there is no consensus among practical scientists. Therefore, for us, of particular interest are questions of the formation of a universal algorithm for selecting a supplier, as well as the development of a methodology for choosing an independent coach based on an assessment of his personal qualities and professional competencies.

In the course of the study, the authors of the article solved the following tasks: an algorithm for the procedure for selecting an educational services provider based on the requirements of the international standard ISO 9000-2000 «Quality Management Systems. Requirements» (GOST R ISO 9001, 2008); a descriptive model of provider selection criteria was developed, as well as a trainer's specification; based on the study of the best practices, a profile of a modern trainer is formed; tools for assessing his personal qualities and professional competencies are proposed.

4. Purpose of the Study

Today in Russia the number of training companies and independent trainers is increasing every year, which complicates the choice of the most worthy ones that meet customer requirements. The number of training companies offering western teaching methods and technologies for solving business problems is growing, which does not correspond to Russian realities and the conditions of modern business processes; does not contribute to the solution of real practical problems of personnel development. There is also a huge differentiation of trainers in terms of professionalism; There is a lack of universal specialists (expert trainers, trainer-consultants), capable of performing not only training, but also expert and analytical work. In this regard, the urgent issue of developing a methodological framework for choosing a training provider.

To achieve this goal, the following tasks were solved in the course of the study: an algorithm is presented for the selection of an educational services provider based on the requirements of the international standard ISO 9000-2000 «Quality management systems. Requirements» (GOST R ISO 9001-2008, 2009); a descriptive model of provider selection criteria was developed, as well as a trainer's specification; based on the study of the best practices, a profile of a modern trainer is formed; tools for assessing his personal and professional qualities are proposed.

5. Research Methods

Scientific works, the results of domestic and foreign scientists on the topic of research, the study of domestic practice of designing corporate personnel training systems and organizing the choice of

educational service providers served as the basis for the analysis of information and the development of methodological recommendations presented in this article. The study is based on the application of methods of quantitative, qualitative and logical analysis. Monitoring the Russian training and consulting market, studying the experience of domestic companies' practices in the selection and conclusion of business cooperation agreements with educational institutions and business trainers allowed the authors to obtain reliable research results and formulate reasonable conclusions.

6. Findings

6.1. Methodological basis for choosing a training provider

Today, there are no problems with the choice of an organization that provides compulsory training for employers: it is conducted by certified training centers. As for other educational organizations, the selection of the most suitable of them should be carried out according to strict regulations.

The development of a methodology for the selection of educational service providers began with the publication of the international standard ISO 9000-2000 «Quality Management Systems. Requirements» (GOST R ISO 9001-2008, 2009). In this standard, the requirements for the procurement process are formulated in general terms: (A) the organization must evaluate and select suppliers based on their ability to supply products in accordance with the requirements of the organization; (B) criteria should be established for the selection, evaluation and reevaluation of suppliers; (C) it is necessary to keep records of the results of such an assessment and subsequent actions.

A study of the practice of Russian companies to regulate the procedure for choosing a training provider based on the requirements of ISO quality standards allowed the authors of the study to develop a detailed algorithm for selecting educational service providers (see Fig. 01).

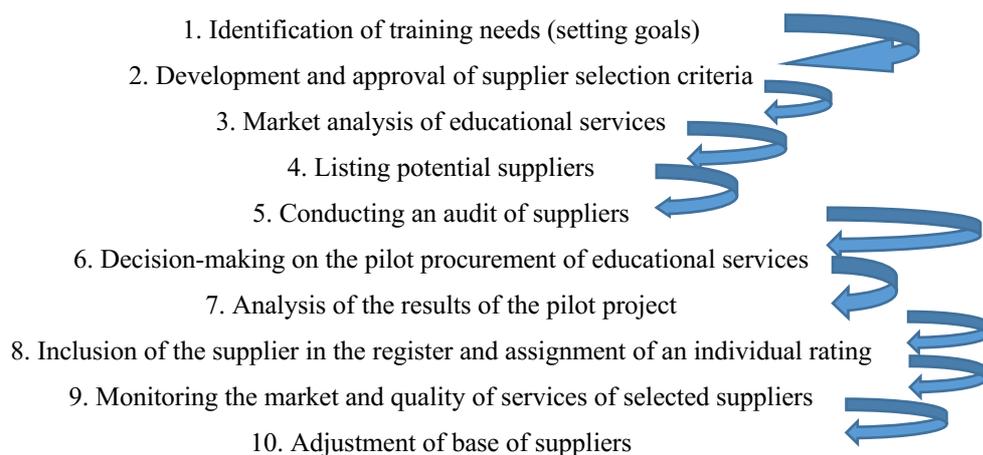


Figure 01. The algorithm for selecting educational service providers

The most difficult step in choosing a training provider from the above algorithm is to develop and approve the criteria for choosing a provider. As part of our research and with the aim of regulating the

process of choosing a provider, we developed a descriptive model of the criteria for choosing a provider (Table 01).

Table 01. Learning provider selection criteria model

№	Criteria of choice of a provider	Very important	Important	Preferably
1.	Correspondence of the specialization of the training company to customer requirements	-Experience in training personnel in the industry represented by the customer	-Experience of training in precisely that category and functional group of personnel that the customer plans to develop	-Availability in the training company of a complete set of programs on all issues of interest to the client
2.	Customer Needs	-Flexibility of training programs, their willingness to adapt to the needs of the organization; -Format and quality of documents confirming the training	-Flexibility of pricing (providing discounts to regular customers)	-Positive reaction to the request for classes on the basis of the customer
3.	Positive reputation of the company among consumers of its services	-The presence of regular customers; -Duration of work in the market of educational services from 2 years-	- Among the clients there are «companies with a name»	- At least three clients who have completed training for the selected program
4.	High professional level of teachers (trainers)	-Practical experience in implementing training programs with trainers; -Experience of trainers in modern business; -Using innovative teaching methods	-Number of trainers working in the company on an ongoing basis of at least 3; -The presence of trainers in basic education corresponding to the profile of taught courses	- Teachers with a «name»
5.	Good condition of educational and material base	- Modern technical training tools; -Regulation of internal business processes; -High quality teaching material for each program	-Modern appearance of the office; -Convenient classrooms, spacious coffee break rooms	-Placing recordings of training fragments, presentations on the website of the training company
6.	High quality handout	-Availability of a set of handouts for each student (background information on the topic of training, exercises, cases and assignments, templates and sample documents, a list of literature, assignments for self-study).	-	-

So, the development of a step-by-step algorithm for selecting a training provider and the regulation of selection criteria are necessary conditions for substantiating business cooperation with specific providers and the basis for the quality of developing corporate events.

6.2. Development of qualification requirements for a trainer

Many companies today conclude an agreement on conducting training events directly with a business coach, as with an individual. Basically, such training is aimed at developing universal competencies – soft skills. In most cases, such training is expensive. In addition, in the market of educational services today there is a huge differentiation of trainers in terms of professionalism. The number of freelance trainers is increasing. According to estimates of the St. Petersburg Club of trainers and consultants, only 5% of trainers are highly professional. Based on this, the choice of a coach is a responsible and difficult stage in organizing staff training and should be carried out according to a carefully thought-out methodology.

When choosing a trainer, you can be guided by the international trainer standard developed by the International Board of Standards for Training, Performance and Instruction. However, it seems to us that the most correct approach to the choice of a coach is using a criteria-based approach. The following can be suggested as criteria for evaluating a trainer: compliance of a trainer's specialization with requirements; customer needs accounting; positive reputation of the trainer among consumers of his services; high professional level of a trainer; good condition of teaching materials; the possibility of providing additional services.

Based on these criteria and an analysis of the experience of a number of Russian companies in organizing interaction with business trainers, we developed a trainer's specification based on which criteria for selecting and assessing the modern knowledge and skills of potential trainers are specified (Table 02), as well as a profile for the ideal trainer (Table 03).

Table 02. Trainer specification (fragment)

Trainer requirements	Very important	Important	Preferably
Have	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Higher education in the field of economics (management) or in accordance with the profile of readable subjects; 2. Coaching experience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a basic education that matches the profile of the subjects taught 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional education corresponding to the profile of read disciplines; 2. Scientific or practical publications in readable subjects
Know	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The legislation of the Russian Federation in the field of education; 2. The requirements of the digital economy development program for the formation of highly qualified personnel; 3. The basics of andragogy, psychology, oratory; 4. Technologies / tools for effective adult education; 5. Ethics of business communication; 6. Methods for assessing staff training and post-training support; 7. Methods of collecting and processing analytical information on training using modern technical means 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The requirements of the international standard GOST R ISO 10015 «Quality management. Guidelines for training» (GOST R ISO 10015-2007, 2009); 2. Current trends in the labor market, trends in the development of industry markets, competencies and qualifications; 3. Trends in the development of the educational services market; 4. Features of the development of the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Domestic and foreign experience in organizing and conducting developmental events; 2. The fundamentals of economic development, entrepreneurship and business; 3. Foreign languages

		National Qualifications System	
Own	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diagnosing the needs of the group in training; 2. In various ways and learning tools; 3. Skills in the development of additional educational material in accordance with the features of the program; 4. Skills in the development and implementation of training programs in various formats; 5. Skills for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of staff training 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tools of mentoring, apply business skills to manage the development of training courses; 2. The ability to manage the educational process; 3. Skills of working with the corresponding application package, projector, office equipment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Electronic document management and training documentation 2. Skills in the administration of processes and workflow for the organization of staff training and their results

Table 03. Profile of the ideal trainer (fragment)

Competencies		Degree of development (level)		
		High	Average	Low
<i>Professional competencies</i>	Business insight	X		
	Motivation of others		X	
	Presentation skills	X		
	Group management skills	X		
	Ability to provide information	X		
	Persuasion		X	
	Conflict management		X	
<i>Personal characteristics</i>	Listening skills	X		
	Adaptability	X		
	Politeness	X		
	Quick reaction	X		
	Creativity		X	
	Self-control	X		
	Self development	X		
	Tact		X	
	Self confidence	X		
Clear diction	X			

Using the profile of the ideal trainer is the basis for an interview between the customer and the educational services provider, during which the communicative skills of the trainer, public speaking skills, his professional competencies and personal qualities should be assessed. A tool for verifying these qualities is the authors’s assessment sheet of the qualitative characteristics of a professional trainer, including a complete list of questions and situations for each of the evaluated qualities (Table 04).

Table 04. Assessment sheet of personal and professional qualities of a trainer (fragment)

Competencies		Questions, validation tool
<i>Professional competencies</i>	Motivation of others	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your approach to providing feedback to the employee on the results of their work? 2. How do you motivate participants to participate more actively in the training?
	Presentation skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you determine what you need to talk about in a presentation?
	Group management skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One of the participants constantly «leads away» from the topic. Your actions?

		2. The hyperreactivity of one of the participants interferes with the whole group. Your actions?
	Ability to provide information	What do you do to ensure that everyone understands correctly what you said and / or wrote?
	Persuasion	1. Why do some people like to chat with new people, while others prefer a constant circle of friends? 2. What will be the difference in the conviction of a person for whom the process is more important and for which the result is more significant? 3. If your idea is not accepted, what will you do?
	Listening skills	What should a good negotiator do - talk more or listen more? Why?
	Ability to work for the result	1. What is the most important thing in your work (process or result)? How is the trainer's performance evaluated?
Personal characteristics	Adaptability	Tell us about the situation when you had to change the style of communication to adapt to different audiences?
	Politeness	What does correct communication with a training participant mean?
	Creativity	In your opinion, is a creative approach to business mandatory in your profession? Justify your answer?
	Self-control	In what situation is a person more effective: under stress or in a calm working situation? Is multitasking and time pressure good or bad for productivity?

7. Conclusion

Thus, the study of the experience of Russian companies in organizing interaction with educational service providers allowed us to develop a methodological framework for choosing a training provider. The use of the developed methodological tools in practice will be the basis for regulating the process of selecting a provider, and, consequently, will increase the efficiency of planning and organizing training events. The quality of a trainer's choice is the basis of effective staff training. Conducting an interview on the basis of a questionnaire will allow a relevant assessment of the real skills, achievements and practical experience of a potential trainer, to understand what personal, professional qualities he has and whether he meets the requirements of the «ideal trainer profile».

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