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## RESEARCH OF THE PERSONNEL ADAPTATION SYSTEM IN MODERN RUSSIAN COMPANIES

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### *Abstract*

The study is devoted to the adaptation of new employees in modern Russian companies. The purpose of the study is to analyse the conformity of approaches to the organization of adaptation in large and medium Russian companies to international trends in personnel management. The main focus is on studying the degree of involvement of managers and the role of HR managers in the adaptation of new employees, the regulation of the adaptation process, the use of digital technologies in organizing the adaptation. The study was conducted in an on-line survey format among 140 leaders and HR managers of different Russian companies in December 2019. The first day of a new employee's work most often begins with a meeting with an HR manager and team leader, but then their role and influence in the adaptation process are further reduced. Most Russian companies don't have a built-in adaptation system as a process, single format for the adaptation plan, welcome trainings and a mentor's systems for new workers, final meetings with feedback at the end of the adaptation period. Also, companies rarely use modern digital technologies to organize the adaptation process. At the same time, most of the participants in the study felt themselves maximally adapted both professionally and psychologically after 3 months of work. It can be assumed that if an effective adaptation system is created in the company, then the term for the adaptation of new employees to the working environment will be reduced to 2 months.

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## 1. Introduction

One of the main tasks of the personnel management function in the company is to timely ensure the organization of the required qualifications by employees. If the selection is responsible for the quantity and quality of the personnel involved, then for his retention in the first year of work in the company is adaptation technology. The construction of an effective and flexible adaptation program saves the company considerable money by reducing losses from the departure of new employees in the first year of work and as quickly as possible immersion in the working atmosphere and tasks. The adaptation system allows a new employee to get to know the peculiarities of the corporate culture, channels and methods of interaction within the company as quickly as possible, immerse themselves in the work process, reduce anxiety and improve the quality of work (Kashtanova, 2019).

Unfortunately, very often adaptation in Russian companies turns into a series of events that are purely formal in nature. Even the leaders of the Russian labor market regard adaptation as a simple passage of a welcome training, the excitement of a job placement plan and schedule of meetings with employees and managers, not realizing how high the potential for a properly organized adaptation is. However, the phenomenally fast development of information technologies over the past 10-15 years in the world and in Russia, the active development of turquoise organizations based on continuous changes, self-training, cooperation and project work, indicates that adaptation should soon turn into a dynamic digital -process, interactive, fast and maximally relevant to the business tasks of company.

### 1.1. Current trends in the adaptation of personnel in the Russian business environment

Analyze the forecasts and points of view of the leaders of the HR community (HR directors, recruiters and learning and development managers, popular business trainers and coaches), we made several conclusions about the trends in staff adaptation that can be observed in advanced and the most successful Russian companies

- Transition adaptation from several events to continuous process: traditionally, adaptation measures take place during the first few days from the moment of employment. However, the practice of the most advanced companies and modern research indicate the high efficiency of adaptation programs that begin at the selection stage and last from three to six months (the maximum period is one year). Such adaptation programs include vocational training, familiarity with HR policies and procedures, and internal relations;

- The emergence of multifunctional programs: the prospects for long-term cooperation largely depend on the first impression of the employer. Effective adaptation programs cover the following aspects of activity: Business context (goals and philosophy, organizational strategy, brand, place in the industry and possible difficulties); Situational context (content of work, expectations, results and parameters of success assessment); Cultural context (organizational values and their impact on business);

- Active participation of senior management: top managers play a key role in adapting new employees and help them realize their mission from the very first day.

- Using digital technology: according to recent trends, technology plays a significant role in organizing and streamlining the adaptation process. Due to the abandonment of traditional methods of

working with paper documents, the process accelerated significantly, and the percentage of errors decreased. In addition, companies were given the opportunity to analyze data and avoid the repetition of errors. As part of the adaptation process, they determine the educational needs of employees, draw up individual training plans, and ensure close communication and interaction in the team. 77% of UK companies that participated in the magazine survey use internal social networks for communication (this figure was 14% in the previous year), 66% share their experience on public networks, 90% support adaptation informational channel (HR Grapevine, 2019).

- Improvement of adaptation programs based on data analysis: in modern business practice, the process of adapting new employees is increasingly called onboarding. Onboarding, or organizational socialization, is managerial jargon that first appeared in the business community in the 1970s and means technologies and mechanisms through which new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviors to become effective members of the company (Chen & Hou, 2016).

Onboarding technologies are becoming more automated, which makes it possible to turn the adaptation of new employees into a continuous and continuous process. Automation of the adaptation of new employees solves such problems as informing an employee about the features of work in the company, training in new products, technologies and procedures, getting to know colleagues and managers, setting goals for the period of a probationary period, and assisting in the interaction of an employee with a mentor. And all these tasks are solved using modern cloud technologies, in on-line format or in special applications on the mobile phone. Thus, adaptation is one of the most important HR processes, which allows to increase the efficiency of new employees and supports the corporate culture of cooperation within the company. Creating a modern adaptation system requires turning it into a continuous and multifunctional process with maximum involvement of managers and the use of automation and IT technologies, big data and modern trends in personnel management.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Despite the high importance and role of adaptation in the process of organizing the work of company employees and in general in the personnel management system, in practice, many organizations and managers consciously and unconsciously skip measures to adapt new employees. At the same time, scientists have proved that not depending on the previous experience of a new team member and on the size of the company (large, medium or small business), the employee experiences severe stress in the first months of work in a new team (Becker & Bish, 2019).

Also, in practice, in commercial and non-profit organizations, it can be observed that certain stages and elements of the process of adaptation of new employees are missed in whole or in part. Unfortunately, at times companies do not have the adaptation system itself as a process, with relevant regulatory documents, a regulation on adaptation, and clear ideas about the procedure for introducing an employee into a new position (Siletti, Guerci, Cirella, Shani, & Radaelli, 2015).

### 3. Research Questions

Our experience, communication with HR-managers and leaders of large corporations and small companies has led to the conclusion that in Russian companies:

- Leaders are not always ready and want to take an active part in adapting a new team member;
- Often there is no clear plan for the adaptation period or trial period with a description of the tasks and results, the main functions of the employee;
- There is no regulated and structured adaptation process;
- The tool such as mentoring in training and acquaintance with a new position and employee company is not fully used;
- Often there is no data in a single information source or format on the organizational structure of the company, main business processes, products and markets, interaction between departments, job descriptions;
- Feedback is not used when performing tasks during the adaptation period and flexible methods for monitoring the psychological state of a new employee both from managers or leaders and from the HR managers;
- Modern digital tools and new IT technologies are not always used in organizing adaptation.

Thus, we can assume that in practice in Russia, when organizing and implementing a program for adapting new employees, HR managers and managers do not use existing tools, methods and technologies. This situation in Russian organizations does not correspond to international trends in the organization of personnel adaptation in companies.

### 4. Purpose of the Study

The main goal of the study is to study the adaptation system in modern Russian companies, as well as the degree to which digital technologies are used to adapt new employees.

#### 4.1. The main objectives of the study of personnel adaptation in Russian companies

When conducting the study, we set ourselves the task of studying or main purposes:

- The degree of participation of the HR managers, supervisors, leaders of teams, top-managers in the adaptation of a new employees;
- How is the adaptation process organized in the company (format for getting to know the company and the team, adaptation plan, welcome training, workplace organization, souvenir products from the company, choice and role of a mentors;
  - Format of goals and objectives for the adaptation period;
  - Organization of feedback during the passage of the new employee adaptation and on the basis of the completion of the adaptation period;
  - The rate of adaptation of employees in the company (psychological, emotional, professional);
  - What modern digital technologies and methods does the company use to increase the efficiency of the adaptation process?

Having solved these research tasks, we plan empirically to verify the degree of compliance of Russian companies with existing world trends in the adaptation of staff.

## 5. Research Methods

As part of our study of the organization of the adaptation system in Russian companies, we decided to conduct a survey in the electronic questionnaire format.

### 5.1. Organization of adaptation research in online survey

To achieve the objectives of the study and confirm our hypotheses, we developed a questionnaire, which included 41 questions. We have posted this profile in on-line electronic format using Google form. We asked HR managers, working students of the HR department, young specialists, business trainers and teachers to take part in our survey and answer the questionnaire. We conducted a survey in December 2019. Our study involved 140 respondents who anonymously answered questionnaire questions.

### 5.2. Study Participant Data

In Table 01 below, the main statistics of the study participants are presented. All data are presented in a generalized form as a percentage of the total number of study participants. The analysis of the obtained statistical data allowed us to make a portrait of the target audience of the study.

**Table 01.** Statistics on study participants

Gender	Age	Total length of service before the company	Period of work in the company
Women - 78%	18-22 – 16%	No work experience – 19 %	Less than 1 year - 32%
Men - 22%	22-30 – 47%	Less than 1 year – 14%	1-2 years – 23%
	31-40 – 23%	1-3 years – 14%	2-5 years – 19%
	41-50 – 7%	3-10 years -35%	5-10 years – 18%
	51-60 – 5%	over 10 years 19%	10-15 years – 3%
	Over 60 – 1%		Over 15 years – 5%

Source: authors.

Conclusion, most of our respondents were young women in active and working age from 22 to 40 years who had more than 3 years of work experience before joining the current company, therefore they already had experience in adapting to the corporate sector and have something to compare with. It is worth noting that most of the study participants have been working in the company for less than a year (32%) or from 1 to 2 years, that is, they are in the process of adaptation.

### 5.3. Information about companies participating in the study

Our study involved employees from large, medium and small Russian and international companies. More than 90% of the study participants permanently live and work in Moscow (the capital of the Russian Federation) Table 02.

**Table 02.** Statistics on the companies that participated in the study

Sphere	Number of employees	Time of existence	Company status
Science, education – 14%	Less than 100 workers – 21%	1-3 years – 4%	Russian company - 69%
Sales – 13%	100 - 300 workers – 17%	3-7 years – 11%	Asian company – 6%
HR consulting – 9%	300 – 1000 workers – 11%	7-15 years – 25%	European company – 7%
Production – 6%	1000 - 10 000 workers – 37%	Over 15 years – 60%	American company – 4%
IT -12%	Over 10 000 workers – 14%		
Banks – 6%			
Art - 6%			

Source: authors.

Conclusion, most of the study participants were large Russian companies that have existed on the market for over 15 years. Also, most of the companies from the field of science and education, HR consulting, sales and IT. We can conclude that in all respects in such companies an adaptation system should have existed, and it was also possible to adopt digital technologies when adapting employees.

## 6. Findings

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were made, confirming the initial hypothesis.

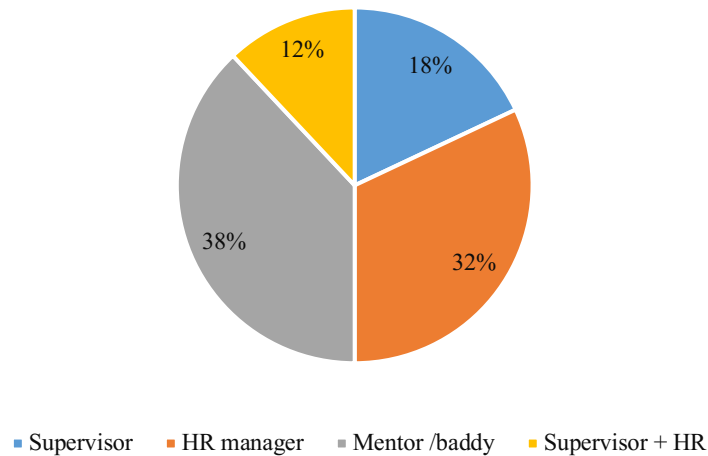
### 6.1. The role of HR manager and leader in the process of adaptation a new employee

The study showed that in more than 60% of the companies participating in the study, the HR manager takes an active part in the first stage of the new employee's adaptation:

- 38% of respondents said that the HR manager met them on the first working day, held a welcoming meeting, spoke about the company and the procedure for applying for a job;
- 30% of the survey participants met the HR manager on the first day, who led them to apply for a job, and this was the end of the meeting.

Also, 76% of the survey participants met on the first working day with their immediate supervisor and discussed the main goals and objectives for the adaptation period. However, in the future, the role and involvement of the leader and the HR manager falls. More than 50% of the participants confirmed that according to the results of the adaptation they did not have a meeting with the leader or HR managers. 60% of participants did not receive feedback on their work during the adaptation period.

It is interesting that most of the participants in the study believe that the main role in the adaptation process is played by a mentor or buddy (38%), then the HR manager (32%), and then supervisor or manager (18%) (Figure 01). Whereas the world experience testifies about a manager plays a major role in the process of onboarding new employees.



Source: authors.

**Figure 01.** Roles in the process of adaptation a new employee

### 6.2. The process of adaptation new employees to the company

The study showed that in most companies the adaptation process isn't regulated: there isn't clear procedure and system for introducing an employee to a new position and acquaintance with the company, the role of a mentor or curator is not defined. The results of our study on the use of different elements of the process of adaptation of new employees in different companies are presented in the Table 03.

**Table 03.** Elements of adaptation in Russian companies

Adaptation plan	Presents from the company	Letter from the top manager	Welcome training	Mentor / buddy
Writing - 24%	Yes - 23%	Yes - 17%	Yes - 25%	Yes - 73%
Oral form - 36%	No - 77%	No - 83%	No - 75%	No - 27%
No adaptation plan - 40%				

Source: authors.

### 6.3. The use of digital methods in staff adaptation

The study showed that only 30% of companies use modern digital systems to organize the adaptation of new employees. As the main digital technologies, services and resources, social networks, an internal corporate portal, SUP Success Factors, E-learning platform, BitrixWebsoft are used. At the same time, only 6% of companies use gamification methods in organizing adaptation.

## 7. Conclusion

Based on the data obtained from the survey, conclusions and assumptions were made. Despite the fact that the first day of a new employee's work most often begins with a meeting with an HR manager and manager, their role and influence in the adaptation process are further reduced. Most Russian companies do not have a built-in adaptation system as a process, there is no single format for the adaptation plan,

welcome trainings are not held and a mentor is rarely appointed, and final meetings are held with feedback at the end of the adaptation period. Also, companies rarely use modern digital technologies to organize the adaptation process. While the majority of survey participants expressed their interest in digital adaptation methods. At the same time, most of the participants in the study felt themselves maximally adapted both professionally and psychologically after 3 months of work. It can be assumed that if an effective adaptation system is created in the company, then the term for the adaptation of new employees to the working environment will be reduced to 2 months or more.

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