

8.2 Process and technology of personnel consulting in the management system of a business entity

Introduction

An essential component of successful business management is effective personnel work. Properly organized personnel management allows a company to: improve its ranking positions, elevate the enterprise to a qualitatively new level, and increase financial performance and labor productivity.

Economic conditions are subject to constant changes. It is the people with their knowledge, professional skills, and experience who become the main competitive advantage. Good specialists are always in demand. The main value of any operating business is human resources. If a company faces issues with employee discipline and motivation, or if the management is unable to resolve personnel issues independently, the situation requires urgent external intervention. Professional personnel consulting can help resolve any issues with staff.

Personnel consulting is a system of measures for diagnosing, correcting, and improving the organizational structure and corporate culture of an enterprise, with the aim of enhancing production indicators, optimizing the work environment, and boosting employee motivation. [204, p. 88].

At the substantive level, personnel consulting is considered a special procedure, the main goal of which is to assess the effectiveness of the applied personnel management system. It serves as an effective method for solving numerous issues in the personnel field and helps to evaluate the human resource potential of a business entity and its alignment with the existing development strategy.

When viewed from the perspective of the socio-psychological approach, personnel consulting is a system of measures with an organizational-psychological focus. These measures are aimed at diagnosing and reorganizing the organizational structure, as well as defining the culture of the enterprise, with the goal of enhancing production indicators, improving the socio-psychological climate, and strengthening staff motivation. [210, p. 88].

This type of consulting helps solve many issues related to the distribution of authority and responsibility, the selection of employees for managerial positions, and the development of career paths for each employee and the entire staff as a whole. Personnel consulting is always associated with solving tasks faced by top-level managers regarding human resource management, with the aim of increasing business profitability.

According to Deloitte research [212], 71% of company leaders agree that their organizations are experiencing a significant shortage of staff, and 53% of companies are observing an increase in voluntary employee turnover.

Tasks solved by personnel consulting:

1. Organizing personnel work from scratch.
2. Enhancing the efficiency of existing hr services.
3. Developing and optimizing specific personnel management procedures: documentation support for personnel management, personnel adaptation, personnel evaluation, incentive and motivation system, training and development [206, p. 5].

Personnel consulting ensures:

- Increasing the effectiveness of the personnel motivation system by optimizing it according to the individual characteristics of the company and the needs of the employees;
- Forming the corporate culture of the enterprise through the analysis of existing traditions, rules, and norms, and aligning them with the strategic development goals of the organization;
- Evaluating the company's human resource potential by diagnosing the individual psychological characteristics of employees and groups;
- Developing criteria and procedures for evaluating employee performance;
- Enhancing the effectiveness of the personnel management system by identifying problematic areas and values, as well as unlocking the potential of individual employees and departments as a whole [206, p. 6].

According to research, the most valuable data about employees for organizations worldwide are productivity, skills, behavior and personality, professional relationships and connections, personal values and priorities [212].

8.2.1 Consulting Activity Process

Most researchers support the view that consulting is the qualified assistance of independent specialists in solving management problems of enterprises. Management consulting is a professional activity that involves providing independent and objective advice and technical assistance by highly qualified specialists to organizations. The goal is to help identify their management problems, find optimal solutions, and implement consulting recommendations. It allows:

- Identifying and analyzing management problems and opportunities;
- Proposing alternative solutions to these problems;
- Providing assistance in implementing recommendations and making constructive changes deemed appropriate.

The primary task of management consulting is to assist clients in solving their management and business problems, optimizing their business, and improving the efficiency of the client's organization. Potential consumers of consulting services are any organizations that encounter management problems.

The producers of the consulting product, who define the supply in the consulting market, are consulting firms. In the management market, consulting services are offered by:

- Branches of large foreign multifunctional firms that have consulting projects with government structures on issues such as taxation, budget regulation, and improving the regulatory framework, as well as serving joint and foreign companies and banking structures;
- Representative offices of foreign consulting firms that are implementing strategies to enter new markets and researching market attractiveness;
- Foreign consulting firms working under donor organization programs and providing technical assistance on management consulting issues in priority sectors of the national economy (energy, transport, communications, agriculture, etc.);

- Domestic consulting firms specializing in providing services on enterprise privatization issues, including property valuation, preparation of documentation for the privatization process, etc;

- Specialized consulting firms providing consulting services in specific areas of management consulting (business planning, financial evaluation, marketing, tax planning, customs regulation, personnel consulting, and others);

- Universities and training centers that, through thorough specialist training, can conduct training sessions, instilling consulting knowledge in students and subsequently offering services on various business issues;

- Independent individual consultants – highly qualified specialists with work experience who typically serve as either experts on specific problems or regular consultants for small firms [209].

The consulting services market is clearly segmented, and competition among consulting product providers occurs primarily within their respective segments.

When selecting a consulting company, potential clients consider the following quality criteria:

- The consultant's or consulting company's successful experience with similar projects;

- The consultant's or consulting company's industry experience;

- Recommendations from companies offering similar services or selling similar types of products;

- A clear work plan and resource plan that accounts for the use of the client's resources;

- The potential for further development within the project;

- The consulting company's ability to correct or compensate for incorrect recommendations;

- Membership of consultants in professional public organizations or recommendations from such organizations.

Personnel consultants solve many tasks, but the most common situations where companies need personnel consulting are the following [205]:

1. The necessity of forming a cohesive team: When all employees of a company are interested in the successful development of the business, this alone drives the business in the right direction. Conversely, if a company lacks a developed corporate culture, and there are no common goals and objectives, such a team is doomed to gradual disintegration. Every organization should have a mission – a clearly defined reason for its existence. It is crucial that every employee, from the director to the janitor, understands their professional role within the framework of the overall corporate goal.

Invited specialists in personnel consulting know how to create or improve the company's philosophy and corporate culture, and how to instill the company's values into the consciousness of the masses. This is not a one-day job, but when done properly, the results will cover all expenses. Employees' awareness of the company's mission changes their approach to professional duties, forms the right attitude towards the company's resources, expands the content of their work, and strengthens motivation. Professional personnel consulting creates the right microclimate in the organization, thereby increasing its competitiveness and, consequently, its profit.

2. Change in the order of team management: The efficiency of the business directly depends on the coordinated and qualified work of the management structures. If the director sees that the company has bloated staff and there is no mutual understanding between different departments, it means that it is time to reorganize the existing order. Consultants will help optimize the number of managers and executors, reduce the time spent on decision-making, and eliminate unnecessary information flows that slow down work. If necessary, some processes will be automated. At this stage, management may need to additionally order IT consulting or accounting consulting.

3. Doubts about the correct distribution of responsibilities among employees. Management doubts whether job responsibilities are correctly distributed, if workloads are adequate to employees' capabilities, and if all employees are realizing their potential. Personnel consulting will help properly assess the professional and personal qualities of each employee and distribute workloads according to their capabilities.

4. Regular problems with the HR department. The company's HR service regularly faces difficulties with documentation, recruiting, selecting, and evaluating personnel. People without qualifications are hired, and dismissals are processed incorrectly. HR consultants will teach the internal service to conduct affairs properly, reorganize the department if necessary, and make its work more efficient and competent.

A consultant reflects the situation, allowing the company to see the world around it more clearly, expands the perception of the surrounding environment, and helps to realize the existence of problem areas and the need to study and overcome them. Sometimes, a consultant must act as a sort of transmitter of ideas between management and company personnel when the communication process is disrupted, becoming a driving innovative force and a catalyst for transformational processes. A good consultant is not someone who knows all the answers, but someone who asks the client questions that provoke thought, reconsideration of approaches, positions, and relationships, and questions that create a field for the emergence of new ideas.

Principles of Personnel Consulting Activities: scientific approach; professionalism; reliability; progressiveness; system preservation; system change; specificity; dynamism; confidentiality; responsibility; creativity; objectivity; effectiveness [206, p. 8].

Personnel consulting can be individual or group-based. Individual personnel consulting uses the modeling method. The most common forms of group personnel consulting are seminars, training sessions, and conferences. Another format for personnel consulting involves special projects implemented within the organization.

From the perspective of consulting methodology, the following types are distinguished [207, p. 30]:

Expert Consulting involves performing the entire range of tasks, from diagnosing the company's activities to developing specific strategic and tactical decisions and recommendations by consultants. The client's role in this process is to provide the consultant with the necessary information, monitor their activities,

understand and accept their recommendations, and develop appropriate management decisions. Expert consulting includes:

- Oral consultations in a "question-answer" format, in the form of discussions, problem-solving, identifying causes, and possible measures for their elimination;
- Written responses to questions, analytical reviews of literature, regulatory documents, and practices;
- Express analysis of the situation, determining directions for intervention (observations, interviews, written surveys and questionnaires, document review, discussion of issues, etc.);
- In-depth analysis of the situation, identifying the real, underlying causes of the company's difficulties (selecting evaluation criteria and developing rating scales and benchmarks, special research programs, forming respondent and expert groups, using special diagnostic tools, model designing);
- Structuring tasks, finding solutions, analyzing alternatives, developing recommendations, providing expert assessments and conclusions.

In expert consulting, the success of the project is determined by the following three factors:

- 1) The expert's qualifications;
- 2) The client's ability to utilize the received recommendations;
- 3) The client's willingness to utilize the recommendations.

In the absence of the second and third factors, even the highest expert qualifications of the consultant cannot make the project successful.

Process consulting, in addition to expert consulting, involves the client's participation in developing recommendations. The need for process consulting arises when the client seeks organizational changes and development but cannot solve this problem independently. In process consulting, consultants actively interact with the client at all stages of the project, encouraging them to express their ideas, thoughts, and suggestions, and to analyze problems and develop solutions with the help of the consultants. This occurs within the framework of activities and procedures proposed by the consultant (the consultant remains an independent external expert throughout

the work, maintaining a distance between themselves and the client organization). The role of the consultants is to organize and manage the processes of information collection and analysis, as well as the development, discussion, evaluation, and adoption of decisions derived from joint work with the client, and to formulate these into a system of recommendations.

Process consulting is a method of changing and developing enterprises and organizations. Its application aims to improve the efficiency of the enterprise (organization) based on the joint work of the consultant and the client. In the course of such cooperation, not only are the current problems of the enterprise resolved, but the employees of the client enterprise also acquire skills in analyzing, evaluating, and solving problems. Thus, the consultant, on the one hand, assists in solving existing problems, and on the other hand, shows the client ways to independently solve problems in the future. A relationship of cooperation and mutual trust should be established between the consultant and the client, as well as an understanding that the outcomes of the process they are involved in are not predetermined and that responsibility lies with both parties.

Training consulting involves implementing programs for training the personnel of an organization or enterprise in various forms, including on-the-job training, advanced training courses, coaching, seminars, lectures, and master classes. Training consulting can supplement other types of consulting, implying additional time investment from the client's personnel for training. The goal of training consulting is to enhance the qualifications of the existing personnel, from top managers to sales agents, and to prepare employees for independent work and optimization of business processes. The foundation of turning to training consulting is the assertion that the success of an enterprise lies in its trained personnel.

Training consulting can be based on standard programs or programs specially adapted to the specific issues defined by the enterprise. It can take place in specially formed groups based on certain criteria, selected through surveys and testing, or in general groups where the work is focused on developing communication skills and collective decision-making abilities.

Integrated consulting combines process consulting and expert consulting, with training consulting considered as a variety of expert-process consulting. Consulting services are often seen not as isolated services but as consulting projects. This is due to the complexity of the problems clients seek to solve, the significant amount of time required, and the human resources that may be involved in the process. To achieve the expected results of a consulting project, it is necessary to undertake a consulting process. The consulting process is a logical sequence of procedures carried out jointly by the consultant and the client to solve problems and implement changes.

In literature, different names for the stages or phases of the consulting process can be found. M. Kubr identifies the following stages in the consulting process:

1) Preparation Stage, which includes the first contact, preliminary diagnosis of the problem, task plan, proposal to the client, and consulting contract;

2) Diagnosis Stage, which includes the conceptual basis of the diagnosis, identification of necessary facts, sources and ways of obtaining information, analysis of facts, and feedback with the client;

3) Action Planning Stage, which includes searching for solution ideas, developing and evaluating alternatives, presenting implementation proposals to the client; implementation, considering the consultant's role in the implementation phase, planning and controlling implementation, and training and preparing the client's personnel;

4) Final Stage, where the consultant's actions are evaluated, the final report is accepted by the client, the consultant is settled with, and negotiations for further cooperation are conducted [203, p. 75].

K. Mackhem reduces the consulting process to three blocks or stages: preparation, execution, and completion. Another noteworthy variant includes the pre-project, project, and post-project stages.

Pre-project Stage of the Consulting Process. The goal of the pre-project stage is to ensure unity in understanding the essence of the consulting project by both the client and the consultant. The pre-project stage begins with the client's realization of the

problem they wish to solve with the help of consultants. Next, information about consulting firms working in the consulting services market is gathered. This can be done by using the Internet to visit the websites of consulting firms, searching for information in directories, utilizing advertising information, recommendations from partners, and studying articles and other publications by specialists in the problematic area. Based on the gathered information, a preliminary selection of firms with which it makes sense to establish contact is made. The first contact can occur via the Internet—through website queries, emails, Skype, and other existing methods—as well as by phone, fax, or direct contact. [207, p. 76].

During the initial contact, the client states the problem (a general formulation of the problem) and inquires about the firm's ability to solve this problem. If a tender is being conducted, the terms of participation are sent out. The initial contacts essentially serve as an introduction of the client (client firm) to the consultant (consulting firm) based on the information and communications between them.

In the selection process, the client makes a decision to purchase a professional service. During this phase, they determine the pool of firms and consultants with whom they could potentially collaborate. Following a thorough selection process, the pool narrows down to a few candidates who are sufficiently reputable and competent.

In the next stage, the selection process shifts focus from the institutional characteristics of the company to the personal characteristics of the individuals the firm will work with. Therefore, the general impression the consultant makes on the client and the degree of their knowledgeability become crucial factors.

The selection of consultants or a consulting firm is based on a number of factors: the professional reputation of the consultant or firm; the consulting firm's popularity and ranking; the availability of information about the firm in directories, specialized publications, and the Internet; work experience; the results of other projects; recommendations from other clients; the quality of proposals and presentations; the cost of services in relation to quality; personal characteristics and the ability to win the client's favor; the level of promotional materials, including business cards; and any prior positive experience with the firm or consultant.

To gain the client's trust, it is necessary to:

- Find an individual approach and become useful;
- Capture the client's attention by learning what interests them and offering something they might purchase;
- Demonstrate your knowledge about the client;
- Create conditions that make the client feel confident;
- Show your level of expertise in the industry;
- Strive to ask more questions rather than proclaim truths;
- Be an active listener;
- Show the client the benefits they will receive from the cooperation.

The selected consulting firm is presented with a technical assignment that formulates the tasks for the consultants. The client's role at this stage involves clarifying the problem definitions and organizing information support for the work.

The technical assignment typically includes the following information:

1. Brief information about the client.
2. Project objectives.
3. Services required from the consulting firm.
4. Project deadlines.
5. List of documents confirming the consultants' or firm's competence.
6. Distribution of responsibilities between the client and the consultants.
7. Requirements for information about the cost of services.
8. Contact person.

Based on the received technical assignment, the consulting firm prepares its proposals in writing, including a description of the technical and financial aspects of the cooperation. The proposal is agreed upon with the client, and if an understanding is reached, a contract for consulting services is prepared.

Project Stage of the Consulting Process. The goal of the project stage of the consulting process is to ensure the client's problem is resolved, meaning positive changes in the client's activities according to the technical assignment. The project

stage includes several steps and procedures. Primarily, it involves forming the project team and working on the implementation of the consulting project.

If we consider the components of the consulting process from the perspective of the tasks performed by the project team, we can identify three blocks of tasks:

- 1) Diagnosis;
- 2) Development of solutions;
- 3) Implementation of solutions [207, p. 80].

Diagnosis relies on conducting research and includes data collection, processing, and systematic identification of the problem based on the research results. The depth and focus of the diagnosis are determined based on the tasks set by the clients and the existing situation. Depending on the situation faced by the client, the consultant may be tasked with:

- Correcting a worsening situation (problem of correction);
- Improving a favorable situation (problem of enhancement);
- Creating a qualitatively new situation (problem of creative development).

In the first case, information about past activities is necessary to identify the source of the problem; in the second, the focus is on the current situation; in the third, models of future development, creative thinking, competitor experience, etc., are used. Consultants obtain information through observation, communication with people, studying documents or other materials. Important information is provided by the client's annual report, studying best practices, conducting interviews, questionnaires, or meetings with discussion groups.

Next comes the main stage – the development of solutions, aimed at finding a resolution to the problem. This stage includes defining the range of acceptable solutions, selecting solutions recommended for implementation, and presenting these solutions to the client.

The initial hypothesis should be proposed during the first meeting of the consultants. It outlines the contours of the problem to be solved before the consultants begin their direct work. To propose a hypothesis, it is necessary to have facts at hand and to structure the problem, breaking it down into its components. Then, the influence

of factors is considered, and recommendations are developed for them. The ultimate goal is to create a "tree of hypotheses."

As noted by I. Rasiel, an initial hypothesis formulated through group work is far better than one formulated by a single individual. The search for ways to solve the problem is a creative process, but according to McKinsey consultants, there are certain rules that can make this process more effective [207, p. 83].

1. The 80/20 Rule. This rule can be observed everywhere. For example, 80% of sales come from 20% of customers. Analyzing a business from the perspective of this rule will inevitably lead to opportunities for improvement.

2. Consider that the problem is not always the problem. The problem posed by the client may, upon closer examination, turn out not to be the main issue. Solving it may require addressing a different problem.

3. Remember that each client is unique. Many business problems are similar to each other, but this does not mean they have the same solutions.

4. Do not reinvent the wheel. Many business problems have more in common than different, so using a limited number of methodologies, you can solve a multitude of different tasks.

5. Do not analyze everything. Be selective, highlighting a sufficient but not excessive amount of data.

6. Identify key factors. Many factors influence a business. It is necessary to identify and focus on the key ones, considering the essence of the problem rather than trying to solve it piecemeal.

7. Take notes daily. Record everything new that happens while working on the project – ideas, events, facts. Once formulated and written down, they will not be forgotten and may prove useful. 8. Концентруйте на одному. Не треба намагатися зробити все самому і відразу. Концентруйте на чомусь одному.

9. Do not agree when someone tells you, "I have no idea." People always have something to say if you dig deeper. Targeted questions can elicit the necessary information and spark an idea.

10. Do not tailor the facts to fit a pre-made solution. It is important to resist the temptation to use the initial hypothesis as the final solution. No matter how original the initial hypothesis is, always be prepared for the possibility that the facts will not support it.

11. Just say, "I don't know." An important aspect of professional ethics is honesty. It is better to honestly admit something than to bluff.

12. Sometimes you must let the solution come to you. The solution will come if you gather the facts and structure them. As McKinsey consultants say, no business problem can withstand analysis based on facts.

13. Look at the big picture. From time to time, you need to step back regardless of what you are doing. This allows you to avoid getting lost in a multitude of problems and not losing sight of the main goal.

14. Pick the low-hanging fruit. Sometimes, while working on a project, new opportunities for immediate improvement emerge. You should take advantage of these, as they help achieve small victories.

15. Make sure the solutions you propose are suitable for the client. Some solutions cannot be accepted by the client due to weak management, lack of resources, or political reasons.

16. The elevator test. You need to master your recommendations so well that you can clearly and concisely explain their essence to the client in 30 seconds.

The developed proposals need to be presented to the client and approved. When presenting the proposal, the consultant should explain:

- the essence of the problem;
- the ways to solve the problem, including strategy and tactics;
- how the new situation will differ from the existing one;
- possible risks;
- the conditions the client needs to create for the implementation of the recommendations.

The implementation stage can occur with or without the consultant's participation. If the consultant is involved in the implementation of the solutions, they:

- develop or participate in the development of the implementation schedule;
- determine the form of control over the measures for implementing the project;
- provide advice to the client's personnel responsible for the project's implementation;
- make adjustments to certain decisions during the implementation process if necessary;
- train the client's personnel.

In the implementation stage, it is necessary to actively involve the client's personnel, defining their roles in the process as well as the role of the consultant. Significant attention is also paid to verifying the fulfillment of all preconditions for implementation, determining the optimal pace and timeline for the client to implement changes.

In cases where the client decides to independently implement the consultant's proposals, the consultant exits the project. This situation is possible if the problem addressed by the consultant is not complex and the client is capable of independently implementing the consultant's proposals, or if, during the diagnosis and solution development stages, the client demonstrated sufficient knowledge and capability to manage the implementation on their own.

Post-Project Stage of the Consulting Process. The goal of the post-project stage is to analyze the results and complete the project. The consultant is responsible for determining when and if it is appropriate to exit the project. If the situation is favorable and the project is nearing completion, a decision is made to conclude the consulting process. At this stage, the client and the consulting organization jointly evaluate the consultants' work, the methods used, the innovations implemented, the results obtained, as well as the client's actions during the implementation of the project. A final report on the project is compiled and approved, and acts of completed work are signed, after which the work is considered finished.

During the post-project stage, a final financial settlement is conducted, and the consulting organization performs a self-analysis to reflect on the experience gained for use in future projects. The relationship between the client and the consultant at the

conclusion of the consulting process is crucial. Both parties seek satisfaction from the collaboration, which is reflected in the feelings of both the client and the consultant. The consultant will be satisfied when they feel respected and trusted by the client, and the client will be satisfied when the collaboration has yielded the desired results.

Consulting Models. Consulting models differ in the degree of involvement and effort of external consultants and the client's organizational staff at each stage of the consulting process (problem diagnosis, development of the consulting action plan, and implementation of the proposed changes).

The "expert-client" model is characterized by the involvement of consultants only at the stage of developing consulting recommendations. This approach helps to minimize both the financial costs for the client and the duration of the consultants' presence in the client's organization. By engaging consultants as experts, the client independently conducts problem diagnosis and implements the consultant's recommendations. The success of the consulting process largely depends on the staff's ability to identify existing problems, determine their causes, and manage the implementation and maintenance of the new system.

In the "doctor-patient" model, the consultant diagnoses the organization, identifies the client's problems, and develops a set of measures to address them. This approach allows for an objective view of the client's problems and difficulties, identifying the true causes of these issues. The process of implementing changes is carried out independently by the client without the involvement and responsibility of the consultant.

The most effective consulting model is considered to be "collaboration." Collaborative relationships enable the combination of efforts between the client and the consultant at all stages of the consulting process. Joint work allows the client's staff to expand their competence, learn methodologies and problem-solving techniques from the consultant, and thereby gain the ability to independently overcome management challenges . [203, p. 69].

8.2.2 Communications in Consulting

The communicative process in consulting is an interactive dialogue between the consultant and the client, which takes place at all stages of the consulting process. Its main participants are the sender of the message (consultant or client) and the receiver (client or consultant); the communicative tools are messages; and the communicative functions include encoding, decoding, reaction, and feedback [207, c. p.100].

When encoding a message, the sender (consultant) must anticipate how the receiver (client) will decode (perceive) it. Effective encoding ensures that the received message is adequately perceived by the receiver. For this, feedback from the client is necessary, which allows tracking their reaction to the message. One of the elements of the communication process is noise. Noise complicates the perception of the message and affects the feedback from the client. Additionally, the receiver does not always perceive the message as the sender intends, leading to information distortion.

The "golden rule" of consulting states that its primary goal should always be to create and maintain genuine collaborative relationships between the consultant and the client.

M. Kubr identifies the following points in the communication between the consultant and the client:

1. The consultant is significantly limited in their activities if the client does not want to cooperate. Refusal to provide information and the opportunity to exchange ideas with the necessary individuals can affect the problem-solving process and the quality of the solution.

2. Collaboration between the consultant and the client helps to identify and mobilize the organization's own resources, as very often the knowledge and skills present within the organization are in a latent form.

3. In a cooperative environment for problem-solving, the client should not feel a sense of "imposed" understanding of the problem and the results of the task. Clients, as often emphasized, must "own" the problem and its solution, and perceive these solutions as their own.

4. Joint work at all stages of task execution, from problem identification and diagnosis to implementation and evaluation of the results obtained. [207, p. 101].

Every organization is characterized by its internal connections and relationships. Therefore, there is the concept of the "Client System." For a consultant to operate successfully, it is necessary to identify who within the "client system" holds the actual power to make decisions related to the consultant's work. The consultant and the client must jointly develop an understanding of the problem, a vision of the result of its resolution, and the metrics for measurement based on an exchange of ideas. This necessity arises because often the client and the consultant see the result and the paths to achieve it differently.

The issue of responsibility is the most crucial ethical problem in the interpersonal relationships between the consultant and the client. To determine the responsibility of each party, the consultant and the client must clarify the nature of the roles they are assuming: who will do what, when, and how, what the mutual obligations are, whether the client wants a ready-made solution, or if they will participate in the process. The main roles of consultants are as follows:

The role of the resource consultant (expert or key role). Their duties include diagnosing the company's operations, providing necessary information, developing possible solutions to the problem, evaluating the feasibility of proposals, developing recommendations for the problem, and training staff. The resource consultant suggests what to change.

The role of the process consultant involves transferring their approaches and methods to the client, training the staff so that the client can subsequently solve their own problems. In other words, the process consultant suggests how to change and helps the client navigate the change process.

Furthermore, some authors consider the consultant's role from the perspective of their behavior. For instance, M. Kubr distinguishes between directive and non-directive behavior. In the first case, the consultant assumes the role of a leader, while in the second, they act as a source of necessary information that the client can choose to use or not.

K. Mackhem identifies three roles for the consultant: assistant, consultant, and manager. The assistant, using the client's experience and knowledge, enables the client to initiate and implement necessary changes themselves. The role of the consultant is to help the client effectively use their own experience and knowledge. The role of the manager involves utilizing the consultant's experience and knowledge. [207, p. 103].

When the consultant and the client have chosen a certain model of cooperative relations, it is advisable to define the role of each of them. The corresponding behavioral roles of the consultant in the organization depend on the consulting model, the specifics of the problem being addressed, the client's expectations, and the characteristics of the organization as a whole. The most common behavioral roles of a consultant are as follows.

The advocate consultant tries to influence the client's system through advocacy. Advocacy can be positional or methodological. In positional (contact) advocacy, the consultant influences the client purposefully, dictating the choice of a certain position based on their activities (e.g., production of goods, decision-making, etc.). Methodological advocacy aims to influence the client's decision regarding the choice of a specific system of methods and techniques for solving a particular problem, but the final decision remains with the client. The choice of advocacy type depends on the consultant's position in the organization, the consulting model, and the scale of the problem [203, p. 70].

The technical expert provides relevant services to the client using specialized knowledge and experience. The client is generally responsible for achieving the consulting goals. The consultant performs only localized expert work, giving advice on a pre-identified problem. Such pure consultation is only possible for a high-level specialist consultant.

An instructor and teacher organizes training within the client's system, conducts training sessions either with or without interruption from production, or directly provides educational and informative content. Typically, instructors are consultant-employees who stay within the client's system for an extended period and are responsible for implementing changes.

A problem-solving assistant complements the client's actions at the stages of perception, awareness, and development of measures necessary to solve the problem. The consultant helps the client maintain objectivity at the problem diagnosis stage, investigate the cause-and-effect relationships of their occurrence, evaluate alternative solutions, and develop an action plan. In other words, the consultant participates in decision-making on an equal footing with the client.

An alternative developer can propose several options for solving the problem and determine the associated risks for each. The consultant also establishes criteria for evaluating the alternatives and develops strategies for implementing each one. However, it should be emphasized that the consultant in this case does not directly participate in choosing the effective solution. The final decision remains with the client, for whom the consultant only prepares and justifies the options.

A fact-finder works with the client's system information. Their influence on the client organization occurs through studying and processing the information array, selecting reliable and credible data sources, involving the client in data collection, presenting results, and analyzing information for the client's management. The result of the client's research should be the client's awareness of the bottlenecks and necessary improvements in their system. The role of the researcher is particularly useful during diagnosis.

All the mentioned behavioral roles of the consultant are related to the content and specifics of the consulting task. A consultant cannot choose and adhere to one role throughout the entire work with the client. It may happen that the chosen model, style, and type of consulting require the consultant to simultaneously generate ideas, find facts, develop alternatives, and train the organization's personnel in innovative measures. The consultant's behavior also aligns with the chosen strategy for reorganizing the client's system.

Any behavior in the interaction situation between a consultant and a client has informational value and constitutes communication. Activity or passivity, words or silence—all convey information and influence others, who, in turn, cannot help but respond to this communication and thus themselves engage in it. In the process of

communication, not only is information transmitted, but the nature of the relationship between communicators (consultant and client) is also determined, which can be expressed both verbally and non-verbally. In consulting, the most important events occur at the verbal level.

Verbal communication is the verbal interaction between a consultant and a client and is carried out using sign systems, the main one being language. The task of verbal communication is to achieve an adequate perception of the information expressed by the client and the consultant. If the solution options in the minds of the interlocutors coincide, the information will be perceived and understood in the same way. Otherwise, the situation becomes more complicated: the speaker (either the consultant or the client) must find a more successful form of expression, and the listener will try to more accurately understand the semantic content [207, p. 104].

The consultant or client must necessarily take into account the characteristics of the listener and the purpose of the speech. Each has their own individual manner of speaking, which is complemented by non-verbal means of communication (intonation, tempo, timbre, pauses, accents, etc.). Established feedback between the consultant and the client allows the initiator of the communication to intuitively "adjust" their speech to the interlocutor.

Certain prerequisites are necessary for verbal communication between the consultant and the client:

- The presence of a communicative-language situation that serves as a stimulus-response for communication;
- The presence of the goal to convey one's thoughts, the communicative orientation of the interaction;
- The presence of knowledge about the content and components of the situation that generates the problem;
- An attitude towards the interlocutor, understanding their mood, feelings, system of views, and knowledge of their communication needs;
- The ability to express one's thoughts and feelings.

There are several errors in the verbal behavior of the consultant and the client during the communication process: inaccuracy of expressions; incomplete information provided to the interlocutor; high speech rate; lack of psychological readiness for communication; presence of semantic gaps and jumps in thought; incomplete concentration of attention; presence of logical contradictions.

The effectiveness of business verbal communications between the consultant and the client is associated with the fulfillment of a number of requirements, namely: not interrupting the interlocutor, showing interest and patience, asking clarifying questions, being able to listen actively, etc. At the beginning of the conversation, the verbal activity of the consultant should be minimal so that the client can focus on revealing their problems and difficulties. The consultant should not only speak but also listen. The ability to listen means expressing genuine interest in the other person. Techniques for proper and effective listening include:

- Approval, encouraging the interlocutor to continue expressing their thoughts, and the ability to agree with them in a timely manner;
- Repeating what has been heard so that the interlocutor understands that the listener grasps the meaning of their words, can repeat the main ideas, concepts, and so on, and highlights the main facts;
- Empathy, which emphasizes to the interlocutor the listener's attitude towards the information;
- Summarizing, which provides a basis for further discussion and review of what has been said. This can involve repeating some thoughts of the speaker, for example: "If I understand correctly, your main problems are..." [207, p. 105].

In communication between a consultant and a client, feedback refers to solving communicative tasks through verbal or non-verbal actions of the interlocutors. To establish feedback in oral communication, the following are necessary: first, attention to the interlocutor: understanding not only their words but also their behavior during communication (facial expressions, gaze, gestures, intonation, etc.); second, constant self-control, ensuring that your verbal and non-verbal behavior helps the interlocutor understand you.

In the process of communication between the consultant and the client, attention should also be paid to non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is understood as a system of non-verbal symbols, signs, and codes used to convey a message. Non-verbal communication includes: gestures, body movements (movements of hands, legs, head, etc.); eye expression, gaze direction; facial expressions; tactile interactions (handshakes, hugs, etc.); smiles; skin reactions (paleness, blushing); behavior manners (how a person behaves in the presence of others, how they eat, how they talk, etc.); psychogeography (the space between interlocutors during communication); clothing (colors, styles); scents (perfumes); makeup.

It should be noted that the first impression that interlocutors make on each other and the audience is of great importance for successful communication. It is believed that a person who wins the first four minutes of communication has won at least a year: if they manage to make a positive impression in the initial moments of the interaction and attract the interlocutor, their positive image will persist for a long time and be very difficult to break. According to the "British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology":

- 55 percent of the information people receive during the first meeting about each other is determined by what they see, primarily through body language and posture;

- 38 percent of the information is determined by what they hear. This includes paralinguistic characteristics such as tone and pitch of voice, speaking pace, clarity of diction, and accent;

- 7 percent of the information is determined by what they say. This takes into account the content of the interlocutors' speech [211].

Thus, during the first meeting, we evaluate other people more by their appearance and non-verbal behavior than by the words they say. Paralinguistic components refer to the quality of sound (volume, tempo, rhythm, and pitch), while extralinguistic components characterize pronunciation features (pauses, laughter, coughing, stuttering, etc.).

For instance, a loud voice indicates a strong motivational force and shows an intention to influence the interlocutor. A fast speech tempo suggests impulsiveness and

self-confidence. Calm and slow speech indicates imperturbability, thoughtfulness, and thoroughness. Confused, interrupted speech usually points to anxiety and nervous tension. Disjointed speech, rich in filler words and hesitations, indicates incompetence or an attempt to deceive the interlocutor. Anger is accompanied by an increase in resonance, while fear makes the voice muffled. Pauses help to buy time and add emphasis to words [207, p. 106].

Facial expressions reflect a person's feelings, states, and emotions. However, the upper part of the face is more controlled by the person than the lower part, so to better understand a person's state, one should look at the mouth, the wings of the nose, and the chin. The lower part of the face is best at recognizing anger, joy, and suffering, but it poorly identifies surprise. The middle part of the face successfully identifies surprise, suffering, joy, and fear.

Gestures accompany speech or replace it. They convey a person's attitude toward someone or something. In the psychology of non-verbal communication, there is no general classification of gestures; all known classifications are based on different principles.

Postures are difficult to analyze. Their interpretation depends on their typicality and prevalence. The most general ones include the following:

- Standing with legs wide apart indicates a need for self-assertion, high self-esteem, and often a compensation for feelings of inferiority.
- Sitting wide and comfortably, taking up the entire surface of the seat, expresses a desire to enjoy calm and comfort.
- Sitting on the edge of the chair with a straight back and full orientation toward the partner indicates a high degree of interest in the interlocutor and concentration of attention.
- Legs crossed or pressed together indicate pedantic correctness or helplessness of the person.
- Hands under the table during business negotiations are a sign of unreadiness for the conversation or an expression of feelings of insecurity and nervousness [207, p. 107].

In the work of a consultant, it is worth considering some rules of gesticulation [208, p. 79]:

- Gestures should be spontaneous. Use a gesture as needed.
- Gesticulation should not be continuous. Do not gesture throughout the entire conversation. Not every phrase needs to be emphasized with a gesture.
- Control your gestures. Remember that gesticulation is an element of the balance of your entire posture.
- Gestures should match their purpose. Their quantity and intensity should correspond to the nature of the speech and the situation of the communication.

Important components of communication are open or closed postures. An open posture is defined by turning the body and head towards the interlocutor, open palms, an uncrossed position of the legs, relaxed muscles, and direct eye contact, which facilitates contact and demonstrates sympathy for the partner. A closed posture is characterized by leaning the body backward, crossing arms and legs, and muscle tension.

An important parameter of non-verbal communication is the quantitative indicator of posture changes per unit of time. It has been established that the number of postures a person adopts during communication correlates with their status and desire to dominate. For example, higher-status individuals change their postures more frequently than their lower-status partners. At the same time, interlocutors who differ in status usually converse with their bodies turned away from each other, while pairs of equal status tend to hold themselves straight.

Gait, to a lesser extent than other elements, is subject to regulation, so it can be used to judge a person's stable individual characteristics:

- A rhythmic gait is characteristic of an inspired person and may indicate a good mood or an interesting solution.
- A wide stride in a person of average or short height is evidence of purposefulness and activity.
- Short, small steps are often typical of a cautious, prudent person who knows how to maintain self-control.
- An interrupted gait, stumbling, indicates insecurity, constraint, and timidity.

- A dragging gait may suggest a bad mood or lack of interest.
- A slow walk with the head down and hands clasped behind the back is typical of a person engaged in solving a problem.
- Strong arm movements while walking indicate a person's determination and decisiveness.
- The habit of constantly keeping hands in pockets while walking speaks of a critical, closed person who tends to suppress others [207, p. 108].

In the process of communication, the consultant and the client subconsciously regulate the distance between themselves. In business communication, intimate, personal, social, and public zones are distinguished. The intimate zone corresponds to the space within which a person feels safe. The boundaries of the intimate zone are approximately at the distance of half an extended arm (no less than 0.45 meters). The personal zone is characteristic of various forms of business communication and involves visual contact between partners (0.46-1.20 meters). The social zone is usually observed during meetings in offices, lobbies, and other official premises where people are not very well acquainted with each other. A distance of 1.20-4.00 meters is typical for conducting meetings, discussions, seminars, and press conferences. The public zone implies communication with a large group of people, such as in a lecture hall. The distance between those communicating is such that facial details and small movements are not perceived [208, p. 88].

Eye contact reflects the relationships between people. It has been established that the speaker looks at the listener at the end of each phrase and at key points in the message. In normal relationship development, people look at each other between 30% and 60% of the total communication period. If two people during a business conversation look at each other more than 60% of the time, they are likely more interested in the person of the partner than in the subject of the contact [208, p. 81]. With a positive development of relationships, partners look at each other longer and more often when they are listening, rather than when they are speaking. In such cases, if the relationship takes on an aggressive character, the frequency and intensity of gazes sharply increase.

In business communication, visual contact helps the speaker feel that they are communicating with a partner rather than speaking into the void.

In the interaction between a consultant and a client, it is desirable for them to look into each other's eyes for no more than 10 seconds before starting the conversation or after the first few phrases have been spoken. Additionally, efforts should be made to ensure that their eyes meet from time to time. Approximately 2 seconds before finishing their speech, the speaker increases the percentage of gazes at the listener; at 0.25 seconds, this percentage increases even more, and after finishing the speech, the speaker usually looks directly into the listener's eyes. [207, p. 109].

Thus, verbal and non-verbal communications help establish constructive and positive relationships between the consultant and the client. The effectiveness of these communications determines the outcome of their joint efforts in solving the client's problems.

An important aspect of the "consultant-client" communications is personal psychological compatibility. Psychological compatibility is the ability to coordinate actions and maintain goodwill in relationships during various types of joint activities. It is associated with psychological aspects and trust between the client and the consultant. When entering into an agreement with a consultant, the client adopts a belief system. It is essential to clarify what this system is and assess how well it suits the specific organization and situation.

The communication process between the consultant and the client is also influenced by external factors, such as the consultant's appearance, vocabulary, communication style, interests, biographical data, stable psyche, and mature sense of reality. The consultant should not only confidently express their point of view but also listen to the opinion of the opponent.

Typical mistakes made by consultants in the communication process with clients include [207, p. 110]:

1. The consultant's inability to establish contact with the client during their interaction. This can manifest in a rigid, tense posture, a lack of smile and eye contact, monotonous, colorless, emotionally impoverished speech, and a lack of confidence

reflected in facial expressions, poor posture, and pleading intonations. Alternatively, it could manifest as "hyperactivity," an overly relaxed manner, reducing the distance between them, and a tendency to "overwhelm" with intellect, showing superiority.

2. Redirecting the conversation from the client's interests to other topics. The consultant should not talk about their own interests or anything unrelated to the client's interests. When a consultant talks to the client about things related to the goals of their interaction, but the connection is not obvious to the client, the client loses interest in the conversation and may want to end it.

3. The consultant's inability to be a good listener. A consultant must be able to listen as well as they can speak. It is very important that they listen to the client attentively and with interest. The client's perception of a lack of attention and interest from the consultant can be associated with both the consultant's low professional level and the client's own "unimportance."

The consultant should not interrupt the client, even if their interaction is time-limited. It's better to let the client finish what is already clear and understandable to the consultant. The consultant should remember that their conversation with the client is not only an exchange of substantive information but also an exchange of emotions. Rationality is not the only criterion for successful communication!

4. The consultant's inability to manage the desire to criticize the client. It is important to remember that the client has approached the consultant not to be criticized, but for the help they need. Most clients do not take well to criticism, especially if it concerns their personality, behavior, or work activities.

5. Focusing on the negative aspects of the client's personality and activities. The consultant should not only avoid starting the conversation with questions about the client's negative aspects or stating their presence but also avoid addressing them until a trusting relationship is established between the consultant and the client. Instead of talking about the client's negative traits, the consultant should discuss the problematic aspects of their activities.

Thus, personnel consulting is a useful and necessary service for those who want to make their business more efficient and profitable. However, the correct choice of

specialists is of great importance. The product of consulting is advice, real implementation, or change that takes place in the organization. The criteria for evaluating the quality in the field of consulting services can include the following criteria:

1. Compliance with project conditions.
2. Providing alternative options for achieving set goals with calculations for each.
3. Alignment of the consulting project with the global standard. Where necessary, the consultant should provide the client with summarized data on global experience in solving similar tasks and inform the client about possible risks associated with the consulting project.
4. Considering Ukrainian specifics and the experience of companies competing in the Ukrainian market when implementing the consulting project.
5. Adherence to the ethical code of consultants in providing consulting services. These norms should include maintaining confidentiality, refraining from working simultaneously with direct competitors, applying the full range of consulting work, and informing the client about possible risks related to the project.

When considering personnel consulting, it is advisable to pay attention to the new format of personnel consulting in the professional space of market activity subjects. This includes, but is not limited to: analysis of employees' psychological compatibility, personnel audit, analysis of employees' professional competence, personnel leasing, team formation, recruiting, training, and personnel outsourcing.

Engaging personnel consulting allows for an independent assessment of the human resource management system, saving time for the manager and key employees of the organization, optimizing labor costs, avoiding conflicts and deterioration of the psychological climate within the team, and increasing the efficiency of utilizing the workforce potential.