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Reconstruction of competition and cooperation attitudes in the procedures of staff reduction while companies’ merging
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<th>The situational specificity of two market leading companies’ merging requires the keeping of competition-cooperation balance in the staff interaction; from one hand, for the highest preservation of each company’s achievements, and from another – for the unproductive tendencies’ overcoming.</th>
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<td>The prevention of negative development is possible through the psychological following of changes taking place in the company or even through the psychological managing of these changes. One of the ways of the psychological support is the group reflection technology which is performed in the development and carrying out the reflexive creative training and practical work (further – RCTPW) for the staff (Naydonov M.).</td>
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<td>The presence of the staff attitudes, which are specially cultivated and technologically introduced into the companies’ organisational culture as the means of increasing the competitive capacity.</td>
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to hold the analysis of the procedural complex of reflexive creative training and practical work as a technology of unproductive attitudes’ changes. (Unproductive attitudes limit the effectiveness of companies’ merging procedure).
The theoretical background of the investigation is the group reflexion theory (Naydonov M.I, 1989); on its basis the reflexive creative training and practical work has been developed as well (Naydonov M.I, Naydonova L.A., 1991).
The process of social attitudes’ changes is traditionally studied under the conditions of laboratory researches.

But we suppose that the necessity of studying the changes’ process of previously technologically created attitudes has arisen, being studied not only under the laboratory conditions but within the real life situations as well.

One of the approaches which gives an opportunity to reach this purpose can be the technology of RCTPW, as the authors propose the possibility of open environments’ modelling.
Methods

In our investigation we used the qualitative methods of the speech analysis.

According to relativistic constructivism the organisational culture is regarded as the total aggregate of all speeches, in which all the companies’ staff participate. In other words, all speeches – official and unofficial, written and oral taking place in the company are the substrate of organisational culture. As the attitudes can reflex not only in the employees’ behaviour but in the companies’ organisational culture as a whole, the methods of speech analysis can fix the processes of attitude changes which is interesting for us.

Interview, documents analysis, observation are additional methods.
The situational specificity of two market leading companies’ merging requires the keeping of competition-cooperation balance in the staff interaction; from one hand, for the highest preservation of each company’s achievements, and from another – for the unproductive tendencies’ overcoming.
Staff’s particular attitudes which complicate the task of merging have been formed under the influence of:

- History of two companies’ strict confrontation, its support and cultivation at the corporate level in the interrelation with the competitor;
- Risk of being fired in case of non-receiving the invitation to the new structure;
- Moral benefit of one of the company’s staff on the basis of which the merger is provided.
Among the examples of such unproductive attitudes is the confidence of one company’s staff that other employees are worse or that they use “incorrect” methods of running the business. In fact, for the increase of both companies’ staff competitive ability the motivational potential of social and psychological mechanism of in-group favouritism (“we are the best”) and out-group discrimination (“they are our competitors”) was exploited and technologically enhanced in the organisational culture.
Additionally we can mention staff’s negative expectations of the merger injustice and anxiety because of it. In each company on the level of corporate values it was postulated that: “Staff is our main capital”, “People are the main”. The obvious contradiction between these values and irreversibility of staff’s reduction as a result of merger enhanced staff’s negative expectations, as the representations about clear mechanisms of merging problem’s resolution weren’t created. These doubts made the process of attitudes’ changes particularly disputed.
While analysing the procedures we can distinguish two types of mechanisms enabled in the process of attitudes’ changes and being realised in the procedures of:

- Values’ regulation,
- Activity organisation.
Values’ regulation

Under the values’ regulation we consider acquisition of values:
- the competition as a reflexive environment of mutual investments;
- the development of company and individual’s vitality under the circumstances of merger;
- heightening of personal professional potential.

The values’ declaration was realized through the text of the Administrative Memorandum validated in Participants’ Personal Workbooks and trainers’ opening speech.
- That is the communique was given at the beginning and was available in writing during the RCTPW and afterwards.
- Besides, the attention, comprehension and confirmation stages were provided by the Informed Concent Procedure (as Psychological Contract) devoted to the participation in the training signed by each participant before its beginning.
Thus, the framework for building a new discourse was created.
The main activity organization procedure was defining by experts (sometimes by a trainer or participants themselves) each participant’s rating with respect to all others at each stage of the competition. The public assessment of experts (company’s line managers who were the winners in the similar managers’ competition) served as a reasoned feedback to the participants based on transparent and concerted criteria and given after each working module according to the training and practical work’s values accepted at the beginning. Hence, the declared before was confirmed by acting according to the publicly accepted values.
Two types of rating were used: in-group, described above, and inter-group, i.e. the rating setting for each group of participants. In-group competitive interpersonal interaction for the high group rating broke down the unproductive cooperation stereotype, limited spontaneous and organized consolidations of some participants. Systematic, multi-time displacement of the high rating participants into the other group consolidating the leaders and the low rating participants into the out-group damaged unproductive competitiveness. Inside the leaders’ group participants and experts were combining their efforts trying to increase the newly created company’s vitality, while inside the out-group they were trying to increase personal competitive abilities at the labour market.
Reflection as attitudes fixation procedure

- The scheme of stepwise negative attitudes overcoming through values’ introduction and activity organization in the interpersonal multi-level competitiveness was completed by reflection procedures as a public self-observation that fixed the obtained changes of attitudes directed to inter-group competitiveness of non-existent companies’ staffs.
The analysis of the procedural complex of reflexive creative training and practical work as a technology of unproductive attitudes changes there have been distinguished mechanisms helping to realize the change: values’ regulation and activity organization.

In the process of attitudes changes in the open life situation of organizational environment the following stages were distinguished: the values’ declaration, the consent of their acceptance, activity organization and public acting according to these values, the last is reflexion (as attitudes fixation).

The RCTPW technology can be considered as a model of unproductive attitudes changes while companies’ merger.