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SKILLS OF GIFTED EMPLOYEES FOR LEARNING

ABSTRACT: Discovering gift begins at an early age, gifted individuals should be stimulated and motivated at an early age. At this stage the recognition of gifted individual, their features, characteristic and requirements begins. Being gifted, talented, exceptional should be, in the modern world and especially in the working environment, the highest recognition, a guarantee of stardom, so to speak. A list of characteristics, which psychologists attribute to such people, shows the most requested elements: a thirst for knowledge, high standards, the ability to multi-task, good memory, quick comprehension, ability to observe and detect connections, creativity and inventiveness, critical thinking and evaluation, and use of abstract power in order to determine the connection between cause and effect. But the world is not always a friendly space for the gifted. Gifted all too often face the problem of being in a conflict with the environment he or she is learning and creating in.

Key words: gifted adults, learning abilities, learning.

1 INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of gift is not massive; there is supposedly about 2% of the gifted population and even less of the extremely gifted. By looking in the past we can see that the gifted were appearing in all cultures throughout the history. In the past, those with exceptional skills and achievements were respected and admired, but sometimes they were also feared of and persecuted. To this day, the attitude towards the phenomenon of giftedness barely changed, but awareness of the importance of gift for cultural progress, scientific innovation and economic well-being has increased (Blazic, 2003, p. 11).

The organization is formed by gifted employees. Technology also effects on the leadership and through the management and psychosocial system also on the people - employees, members of the organization. Employees adapt to the technology, because it provides working spaces and work tasks that someone has to do. In this context, an important set of knowledge, skills and ability, on how to use

them successfully is needed. If we succeed to link job characteristics with the gift of the individual, we can look forward to excellent results.

The difference between the inventive, innovative employees and those who are only capable of performing their routine job is more distinct the more a profession intellectual component is important. At physical work mainly quantitative differences in abilities can be noticed, and on the other hand at the intellectual work the qualitative abilities stand out.

If the employee performs better than another employee, but not because he is faster and more skilled, but because he discovered a new working process or working device, the difference between him and other workers is not only quantitative but qualitative. The essence of this difference is of course in his creativity. If we understand the concept of giftedness as something real we have to link it with the concept of creativity. At the same time we can understand the gift and creativity in terms of the extremely high level of development of intellectual abilities (Makarovic, 2003, p. 20).

Gifted employee is often misunderstood, because his patterns of thinking are different from the majority of employees, which are integrated into the work processes. Gifted often even cause disputes in the process of work and their deviation from the established working practices are not accepted. The lack of understanding often causes aggressiveness, introversion or stubbornness, because of blocked and swirl ideas, desires and needs. There is an opinion that all negative or problematic personality traits of highly gifted and obtained are the result of bad experiences and not inherited. Between the education and training the gifted expects that he will be able to deal with the activities he is interested in, and will be able to work on his skills. However, as the plans for the training are mandatory for everybody and have no interest in individual, the frustrations are increasing (Jericek, 2003).

2 LEARNING GIFTED EMPLOYEES

Giftedness can also be a random combination of emotional and cognitive areas, and environmental factors. Gift is a beneficial set of skills, creativity, and personality traits. Affordable biological disposition and environmental influences may encourage the development of skills that create conditions for potential giftedness.

Abilities are special group of properties of the human personality, on which the success, under some conditions, depends on. The success of an individual depends on the following functions (Kastelic Hocevar, 2003, pp. 282–283):

- I can - human abilities, skills,
- I know how - human behavior, skills, knowledge acquired through learning and training,
- I want to - interests, attitudes and motivation.

Gifted people have some personality traits that are not found or not so outstanding in other people. However, even they are not a homogenous group, because there are also differences within the group of gifted. Personality traits that

are found in the group of gifted relate to different areas. The most typical are the following:

- Mental and cognitive field

Developed divergent and logical thinking, unusual imagination, accuracy of observation, good memory, and sense of humor.

- Learning-performance-area

Broad-mindedness, quick reading skills, skills in artistic activities, motor skills and endurance.

- Motivation

High inspiration, the need to achieve excellence, curiosity, diversity, powerful expressions of interests, persistence in problem solving, high performance motivation, and enjoyment of achievements.

- Socio-emotional area

Nonconformity, a strongly developed sense of justice, independence and autonomy, the ability to lead and influence others, a pronounced sense of organization, empathy, lack of flexibility, intuition, emotionality.

If we look at the attributes we can conclude, that the gifted employees can be very useful for an organization if they are creative and give good results at work, since the organizations tend to engage in workers, that effectively and independently perform their duties and take over the responsibility of important exercises and in those that carry out the work within the agreed deadlines, even if they have to work outside working hours. All these factors are a good indicator for the organization that wants to make progress by recognizing the potential quality workers. Of course, gift alone is not enough for successful work, but it is certainly one of the main driving forces, which encourages an individual to perform better and to do a higher quality work.

Original features of gifted are the following: they are interested and are quick and easy to learn, they have good problem solving skills, they use advanced vocabulary, they understand complex and abstract ideas and have the will to seek new information. Secondary features of gifted are: highly creative behavior, a wide range of interests, desire for knowledge, interest in knowledge outside the school or department, independent thinking, seeking for reasons and explanations, perfectionism and self-criticism (www.ffpu.hr/fileadmin/Dokumenti/13._DAROVITOST.ppt).

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We need to provide suitable particular working spaces for gifted individuals and also surround them with a sympathetic environment. The result is the satisfaction of the employee and the added value for the company. Simple, yet

effective winning formula should be a guide for any successful manager. Happy individual in a stimulating environment will certainly achieve above-average results.

The awareness, that gifted individuals are able to assist in solving complex problems, is growing. Many of them operate at a high level, but not only gifted pupils, also some gifted employees don't function properly and are therefore unhappy. Some even become permanently unable to work. Sometimes the companies don't even know who is gifted or they don't know how to work with them. Endowment with high intelligence is often accompanied by unpopular features such as unconventional behavior, asocial behavior, psychological disorders or perfectionism. Although each individual has a unique gift, some of the gifted share certain characteristics that are typical for most of them. Some of them are present naturally, others have emerged gradually through interaction with the environment:

- Speed of thinking. Gifted individuals think more quickly than others. They make many mental switches, associate rapidly and give the impression that they jump from one subject to the next.
- High sensitivity. A higher development potential often is accompanied by high sensitivity. This high sensitivity manifests itself in different areas: psychomotoric, sensorial, intellectual, imaginative, emotional, and can resemble ADHD.
- Over-stimulation of the senses manifests itself auditively (machines, radios, smacking lips), visually (light sources) or sense of touch (certain fabrics, labels in clothing, or touching). Currently, there is a high level of interest being shown in high sensitivity in general.
- Introversion. The internal world of the gifted is particularly well-developed. They are quickly and easily hurt, which is why they tend to keep people at a distance. Some avoid parties and suchlike since the topics of conversation do not interest them. This can resemble autism. Introversion can also arise through having the feeling of being rejected. People with high IQs would seem to have difficulty meeting like-minded people, which can quickly lead them to become isolated.
- Emotional development. Many gifted individuals feel emotions strongly. But because cognitive thinking dominates and provides safety, emotional development remains relatively underdeveloped. They have difficulty in linking feelings and reason. This can be reinforced when an individual has felt lonely from a young age. For example, when the environment does not acknowledge or recognize the child as being gifted. Fortunately, the emotional development of many gifted individuals has progressed well.
- Creativity. The thought processes of the gifted differ from those of average intelligence: they are more global in nature and with a strong capacity for imagination. Averagely intelligent people can often not follow their train of thought. They can identify patterns quickly, so that they can, for example, predict trends successfully. They can often draw conclusions intuitively. This creativity is often frustrated by the regular education system.

- Independence. The forming of judgments and opinions often takes place autonomously. They are non-conformist and therefore display what teachers easily label as 'inappropriate behavior'. This independence accompanies the creativity mentioned above. They often have an aversion to non-democratic authority.
- Perfectionism. Perfectionism is often accompanied by having too high expectations of others, but also with shame, guilt feelings and feelings of inferiority through not being able to meet their own high expectations. This leads to tension and occasionally 'paralysis'.
- Learning style. The learning style of the gifted is often exploratory. They have an extreme dislike of learning lists, they find it uninteresting and become bored. Often, they do not understand the teacher's questions or the questions in the text books, because they are looking for things that aren't there. This leads to frustration. Some gifted adults lack basic knowledge but have a lot of knowledge in areas that they are interested in. They often fail to develop learning strategies because they never learn from their failures.
- Fear of failure and under-performing. If their intelligence is not stimulated, children often develop bad working habits. They sometimes think that they are stupid, become afraid of failure and start under-performing. Their motivation to learn decreases. This can result later in frustrations and disappointments in their career (http://www.davidsongifted.org/db/Articles_id_10495.aspx).

Areaasm, which the individual considers important, may be, for the environment in which the perfectionists live, trivial, unknown. The society highly values the technology, the arts, and sports, but finds perfectionism in school unnecessary. Perfectionists connect their excellent achievements to their identity, and are not aware that with that the identity is hard to keep. Personality are now only successes, results, personal ego is nothing more. Some people have serious problems with insomnia, suffer from the constant need of certification, cheat themselves, exclude themselves from society because they were not perfect, and stop schooling, if they are not the best. Postponements and delays represent an interesting feature of perfectionists. They are expected to always be the best. To protect themselves from criticism and self-criticism of the surrounding area, they rather postpone things and delay the work. They delay new tasks, as each task represents a new step on the path where they can also fail. Due to delay of work perfectionist can no longer work and they simply surrender (Ferbezer, 2005, p. 260).

Some of the gifted within the company don't stand out or the utilization of their potential is not optimal. Most of the reasons lie in the personality characteristics of gifted and in some cases in formal inappropriate leadership, guidance and motivation. Perfectionism is present and a disturbing factor in the technical rapidly evolving global world. Technological obsolescence that threatens their product before their natural depreciation is forcing us to quickly find effective solutions, which are often productively active before the period of prolonged laboratory test trials. New products, upgrades and modifications are carried out

every day. Precision and perfectionism of developers are not supported through sponsorship and the low price of products is forcing managers to confirm its use without the required test trial, stress of test, and production with known and identified errors that can be eliminated with mitigating controls and actions. All this is carried out to bypass errors that would require a longer testing period and elimination of it in the core of the product. Technology does not dictate the business, but business dictates technology. Because behavioral characteristics of gifted the new age of turbo-capitalist mentality requires conflict situations that need to be properly addressed. For this reason the behavior of the gifted in a working process may also be disturbing. Being gifted is not always easy. Neither for children, nor for adults. We don't lose the gift by growing up, but sometimes it causes our internal conflicts which are usually provoked by external factors, such as work environment. If we want to create a creative environment which is friendly for the gifted and focused on productivity, we have to pay attention to particular behavioral characteristics of gifted and resolving tensions that occur in the workplace and in the work process.

Gifted must first be recognized and respected, then encouraged and supported. Motivated individuals with a very high intelligence are capable of high quality work and can solve complex problems. Gifted worker, who functions directed and managed, represents an important contribution to the work. Gifted have the natural ability, a gift, a prominent intelligence. A gifted individual can also have the capacity for excellence at the field of constructive human actions. Researches show that people are usually not gifted at all. They are gifted for specialized areas and because of their high intelligence they also have their own needs.

3. CONCLUSION

Gifted people are an urgent theme of society, especially of the ones, in which knowledge, education, and progress is steadily increasing. Endowment with high intelligence and special abilities is often accompanied by unpopular features such as unconventional behavior, asocial behavior, and often can be psychological disorders. Gifted often have to face the enviousness of average gifted, high expectations of parents and society, and potentially also with inadequate school system. There have been many positive changes in the last few years on the area of school system and gifted have more of attention. It used to be desired, that everyone is average, and no one stood out. First of all, the talent can't be equated with intelligence nor with creativity. It is also necessary to distinguish between general gift and specific gift.

Gifted are in the working process the key personnel and are able to undertake more complex tasks. Organizations are increasingly aware that gifted individuals have the ability to solve complex problems. Their performance is higher than the performance of average workers. Managing with gifted employees requires skilled managers and direct management. Gifted employees are often, due to their personal characteristics, difficult personnel to manage. Individual in a working process can't be treated the same as a machine. If an employee is placed on a

position of an obedient executor of commands of his superiors, we can't expect some special diligence, creativity and innovation at work on his part, which means that having this kind of leadership in the company is left with a lot of unused productive potential of human capital.

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SPOSOBNOSTI NADARJENIH ZAPOSLENIH ZA UČENJE

POVZETEK:

Odkrivanje nadarjenosti se začne že v zgodnji mladosti; nadarjene je treba stimulirati in motivirati v rani mladosti. Prav tu se začne spoznavanje nadarjenih in njihovih lastnosti, posebnosti in zahtev. Biti nadarjen, talentiran, izjemen, naj bi bilo v sodobnem svetu, predvsem pa delovnem okolju najvišje priznanje, tako rekoč jamstvo za zvezdnitvo. Že seznam lastnosti, ki jih psihologi pripisujejo takim osebam, odseva najbolj iskane prvine: željo po znanju, visoke standarde, sposobnost opravljanja več nalog, odličen spomin, hitro razumevanje, sposobnost opazovanja in odkrivanja povezav, ustvarjalnost in inventivnost, kritično in ocenjevalno razmišljanje ter uporabljanje moči abstrakcije za ugotavljanje povezave med vzrokom in učinkom. A svet ni vedno prijazen prostor za nadarjene. Nadarjenost namreč vse prevečkrat povzroča konflikte posamezniku in v okolju, v katerem se uči in ustvarja.

Ključne besede: nadarjeni odrasli, sposobnosti za učenje, učenje