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FEATURES OF APPROACHES TO COMPETENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND BUSINESS

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Abstract. *The task of the competence-based approach in higher vocational education is the training of qualified specialists that are competitive in the labour market. The review of the requirements of numerous firms to the competence of employees showed that for a particular business one needs professionals who have certain "business"-competencies that bring profit to the company: no profit – specialist has no competencies. At the same time, more attention is paid to universal competencies when hiring. As a rule, professional competence is confirmed by the diploma of the university. In work methodical features of various approaches to modelling "business"-competencies at employment of graduates of high schools are considered.*

Keywords: *professional concepts, universal competencies, "business"-competencies, indicators (concepts), modelling "business"-competencies.*

The main goal of higher professional education is to train qualified specialists, competitive in the labour market. This issue is of great importance, since for a society with an innovative knowledge economy, the level of employees with higher education should be at least 60% [1]. At the same time, graduates of universities should have both professional and universal (general cultural) competencies [2].

Professional competencies (activity-based) are the comprehending of the occupation in its entirety, the possibility of carrying out the necessary research, commanding professional information technologies in the digital economy. Universal competencies presuppose the mobilization of the cognitive and creative abilities of the student, as well as the availability of certain social skills. However, much less attention is paid to them in higher education than to professional competences [3].

In business, they have a different attitude. As the review of the requirements to the competencies of employees of more than one hundred firms, including Fujitsu, Emir Oil, Nissan, OMK has shown, if an employee, even having a doctoral degree and patents, i.e. possessing professional competencies, but because of the lack of universal competencies does not bring the company income, it is considered that he does not have any competencies at all [4].

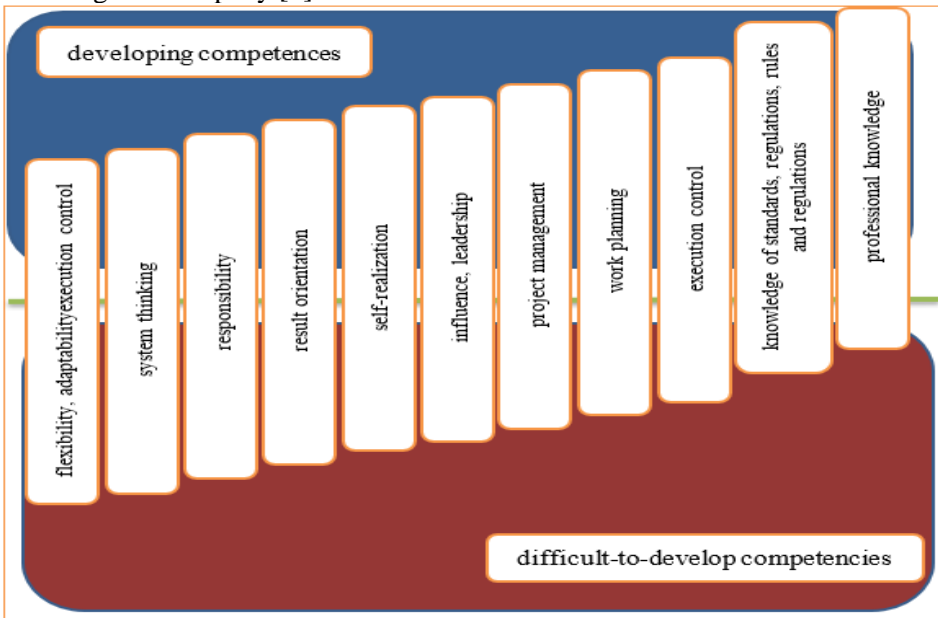
The purpose of this work is to explore the various approaches to competencies formed in higher education for a diverse labour market and

required for successful work in business.

Indeed, at the university at all stages of higher education a fairly wide range of competences is formed, i.e. readiness of the graduate to apply knowledge, skills, abilities and personal qualities in standard situations of future professional activity. But in order for a college graduate to work effectively in a particular firm, he must have well-defined competencies, which are called "business"-competencies. At the same time, it is often forgotten that even if a graduate commands "business"-competencies – it is only a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for graduate's effective work in the firm. For effective work it is important that the company's management is constantly working with the employee. And if this cooperation does not take place, then this situation leads to paradoxical denial of competencies in the business, even for a Ph.D., who has patents for new inventions. In other words, the most important condition is violated - the lack of work of a specialist and a manager in a team.

In the conditions of constant changes in the external and internal environment, at the present time in most large firms, when hiring graduates of higher educational institutions, they simulate the availability of business computations necessary for the firm.

In the Pic. 1, based on the review of the requirements for the competencies of employees, typical requirements for the "business"-competencies of graduates of the university are given on the example of their admission to the United Metallurgical Company [4].



Pic. 1. Requirements to "business"-competencies of graduates when then are hires by the United Metallurgical Company (OMK)

At the same time, it is noted that the most important when recruiting for work are the first five difficult-to-develop universal competencies. Universal competencies are beginning to form in a person already in the family, the school, and then at the university, where, as noted above, much less attention is paid to them than to the professional one. Therefore, it is easier for the HR-department of the firm to find graduates of higher education institutions, trained in universal competencies, than to develop these competencies after a person has been hired. At the same time (except for special cases) the developed professional "business"-competencies receive less attention when hiring. It is very important that the applicant has a diploma of a prestigious university and corporate development programs for the necessary professional "business"-competences.

When modelling "business"-competencies when a candidate enters the firm, unlike the university, not only the qualitative assessment of the competences formed during the study [5] occurs, but also a more rigorous quantitative assessment of their competence takes place. To do this, very detailed components of simulated "business"-competencies, called indicators or more strictly concepts, are developed. Pic. 2 shows the process of evaluating the indicators of one of the main universal "business"-competencies: "Teamwork and cooperation" [4].

Teamwork and cooperation	Direction	Evaluation				
Indicator		Never	rarely	in half the cases	often	always
Asking others about specific situations	+					*
Gives time to explain and assist others	+					*
Acting, takes into account the views of others	+					*
Supports others in their quest to take important tasks	+				*	

Offers help in analyzing situations, helps determine how to improve the situation	+					*
Gives concrete examples of behavior in work situations	+					*
Gives people the power and motivates them to make proposals, how to conduct work	+					*
Shows how to do the work, and how the result should look	+					*
Discusses specific events and gives people the opportunity to respond	+				*	
Provides support, seeks to make sure that the right understood, asking questions and verifying the results	+				*	
Identifies the strengths of employees, team members, colleagues, as well as their parties in need of development, and acts accordingly	+		*			

Does not explain why the work should be done this way	-		*			
Allows himself to judge the identity of an employee	-					*
Unilaterally imposes feedback and actions to improve work	-				*	
Acting, ignoring the opinions of others	-			*		
Does not give feedback on the quality of the work, on the potential	-					*
Agrees with the decisions of the team and carries them out together with other	+		*			
Seeking to know the opinions of other team members, asking additional questions to make sure that they understood correctly	+				*	
Invites others to share ideas and opinions in the decision-making and planning process	+			*		

Benefit from the multiplicity of opinions in the group	+					*
Before making a decision, is interested in the opinions of others	+					*

Pic. 2 Assessment of a specific universal "business"-competence called "Team work and cooperation"

It should be noted that regardless of the number of developed indicators of simulated "business"-competence, its further evaluation is based on a preliminary chosen 5-point scale (Table 1).

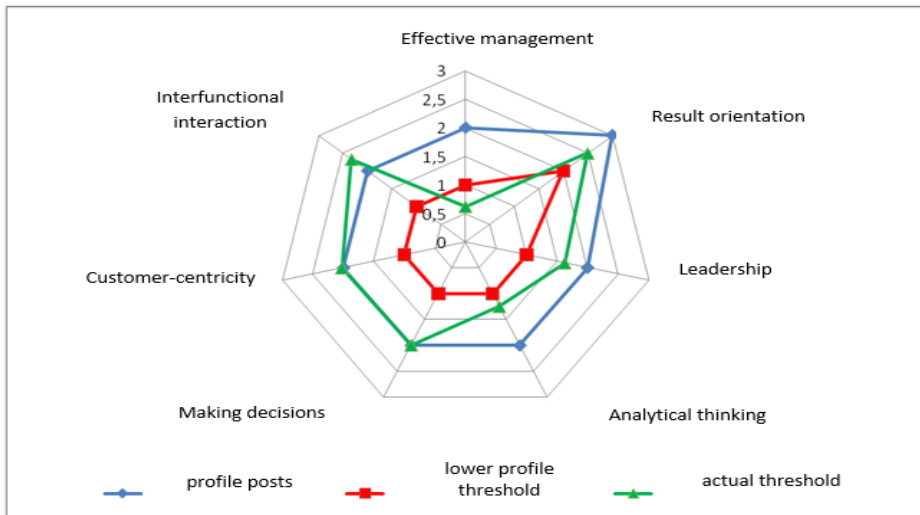
***Table 1
Five-point evaluation of the simulation result
"Business"-competence "Teamwork and cooperation»***

Total result of Assessing the indicators	Evaluation "Business"-competency
175-190	5
145-174	4
84-144	3
54-83	2
38-53	1

In this particular case, when modelling the "business"-competency: "Teamwork and cooperation," it is rated at 4 points [4].

It should be emphasized that the basis for modelling "business"-competencies when hiring graduates from universities is usually a multi-method approach [6]. Thus, when hiring college graduates for ordinary vacancies in the modelling of their "business"-competencies, data are usually used to assess the relevant indicators of these competencies of the best and average performers of this organization on equal terms. At the same time, data on the competence of

medium performers can be taken for the lower threshold of the acceptable profile of the "business"-competencies of the applicant, and the best for the desired profile. Within this range the profile of the candidate for the post (Pic. 3) should be located.



Pic. 3. The profiles of "business"-competencies of the best and average employees, as well as the profile of the applicant for the post

But when a university graduate claims to be a promising group for the development of a company, the modelling of his "business"-competencies is carried out not only by evaluating the indicators (concepts) of the best employees of this group, but also by external experts. Finally, the "business"-competencies, their indicators (concepts) and an acceptable assessment of the competencies necessary for the effective work of the applicant, are determined, in this case, by the persons making strategic decisions in the organization.

The above work is carried out by them in the following order:

1. The factors influencing the development of the organization are assessed (forecast of the company's business environment for the next 3 to 5 years)
2. Clarify corporate goals / business objectives: goals oriented to the future situation that will develop in the next 3-5 years and outline a business strategy to achieve these goals
3. The consequences of achieving the set goals for the team are assessed
4. Developed "business"-competencies and their concepts for employees who must address the strategic goals.

Conclusions. In the university a fairly wide range of competences is formed, i.e. readiness of the graduate to apply knowledge, skills, abilities and personal

qualities in standard situations of future professional activity for a diverse labour market.

At the same time, as the review of the requirements of numerous firms to the competence of employees showed, in business they believe that if the activity of an employee, even having a doctoral degree and patents, does not bring the desired results to the firm, then he does not have competencies. This can only be explained by the fact that if such a specialist is recruited, the most important condition was violated – the lack of joint work between a specialist and a manager in a team.

At present, the necessary condition for a college graduate to work effectively in a particular firm is the presence of his well-defined competences, which are called "business"-competencies. This is determined by modelling such "business"-competencies.

The principal point here is that more attention is paid to hard-to-develop universal competencies when hiring. With the exception of special cases, the developed professional "business"-competencies receive less attention at hiring. Here the diploma of the prestigious university of the applicant and the corporate programs of development of professional "business"-competencies are of great importance.

When modelling "business"-competencies of the applicant when entering the firm one performs not only a qualitative assessment of the competences formed during the study, but also a more rigorous quantitative assessment. To do this, very detailed components of simulated "business"-competencies, called indicators or concepts, are developed.

The basis for modelling "business"-competencies when hiring college graduates is usually a multi-method approach. So, when hiring college graduates for ordinary vacancies in the modelling of their "business"-competencies, data are usually used to assess the relevant indicators of these competencies of the best and average performers of this organization in equal positions.

When a university graduate applies for a position in a promising group for the development of a company, the modelling of his "business"-competencies is carried out not only by evaluating the indicators (concepts) of the best employees of this group, but also by external experts. Finally, the "business"-competencies, their indicators (concepts) and an acceptable assessment of the competencies necessary for the effective work of the applicant, are determined by persons making strategic decisions in the organization.

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