

## Sociotechnical Principles of Humanization of Organizational Relations

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**Abstract.** The article is dedicated to the basic socio-technological principles of the humanization of organizational relations. The article concentrates on key characteristics of social technologies and features of humanization as a determinant of the transformation of organizational and managerial practices. The authors classify, highlight a number of general or specific socio-technological principles, analyze the prerequisites for their emergence and development. It also considers the specific management approach based on sociotechnical principles, and their application in the practice of organization management. The communicative nature of organizational relations is noted, the relationship between the elements involved in them and the specific ways of regulating the ongoing collaboration is highlighted. Considering the prerequisites for the transformation and humanization of organizational and management practices, the authors indicate a different extent of organization's readiness to update the employed methods and approaches. In this case, the main determinants are the characteristics of the team, the phase of the organization's life cycle and the existing request in the external social environment for changes in the activities of organizations, increasing their overall efficiency and effectiveness. The key to success in this activity is transformation and humanization of organizational relations, based on managerial practices, which include set of general or specific socio-technological principles.

### Introduction

The modern manager focuses on improving all aspects of the organization. To this end, he looks to bring innovative solutions to the processes of decision-making and implementation of the decisions, to use the most advanced production technologies, to create conditions for continuous growth and development of the true potential in staff. Such approaches, in our opinion, reflect the core essence of organizational and managerial practices, according the fact that “business is forced to adapt to changes in society and constantly strive to do their job better today than yesterday, and tomorrow is better than today” [1].

Without a continuous increasing the efficiency, it is impossible to maintain high profitability throughout long periods of time, and managerial efficiency, in turn, is determined by taking into account social and specific character. Therefore, it is important to find and apply such approaches, in terms of which the needs of the management subsystem, the requirements of the managed subsystem, and the expectations that society associates with the activities of a particular organization will be taken into account. The result of this can be considered the emergence of innovative social and managerial technologies, new approaches to human resource management, in

particular, knowledge management, the features of which are considered in publications on crosscutting themes [2].

As a result of taking into account various management factors will then be a fundamental restructuring of the entire system of actual managerial interaction. At the same time, we can talk about increasing management efficiency. Moreover, it acquires special significance in the conditions of humanization of management and other aspects of the organization. As reason, it could be considered the fact that optimization is regarded as “providing conditions for the selection and implementation of the best behavior (functioning, development) of the social system” [3]. We characterize this approach as a humanistic one, since in this instance it is appropriate to talk about providing the controlled subsystem with a certain freedom of action, which results in a transition to a qualitatively new level of development. In addition, the administrative subsystem also faces the importance of choosing, and it must exercise its functions to ensure the stability of the system as a whole. In other words, in the optimization process, both management and staff coordinate their actions with the strategic goals of the organization's development, ensuring their early achievement and taking into account the need for the greatest possible increasing efficiency.

## **Methodology**

The complexity of the problems of humanization relationships "person-organization" predetermined the need to use a systematic approach, which provides an analysis of organizational relationships as a large number of related components, each of which is connected directly or indirectly with each other element, and any two subsets cannot be independent. As parameters of the “person-organization” system is identified: limited number, integrity, structuralism, interaction of environment, hierarchy, plurality of descriptions. In addition to a systematic approach, a socio-technological approach is used. Social technology is understood as a specific way to implantation of activities, based on its separation into certain operations, ensuring their coherent relationships and integrity, instrumental support.

One of the current trends in modern sociology is the study of the theoretical aspects of social technologies and the determination of the possibility in practice.

***The meaning of social technology.*** At the same time, it is taken into account that “social technology, like technology of any kind, is intended to move activity into a regular form, its task is to ensure the maximum coincidence of the goal, means and result, and with the minimum expenditure of forces and means” [4]. In a significant number of cases, application of social technologies enhances efficiency of the organization's activities. In this regard and within process of humanization of relations in the "man - organization" system open great prospects.

The matter is that the technologization of this process allows us to solve two interrelated tasks. Firstly, the most effective model of interaction with a particular organization is being developed, its essential characteristics and value bases are determined. Secondly, it becomes possible to transmit previously accumulated managerial experience, adapting it to new conditions of use. By identifying specific socio-technological principles of humanizing the relationship between a person and an organization, you can better understand the very essence of this process, as well as shape the prospects that the ongoing activity has in modern society.

***Systematic process.*** Systemic nature is one of the features of the role on the humanization of relations in the system "person - organization". It is impossible to imagine a situation where a humanistic orientation manifests itself in periods, between which there is a limited freedom of employees previously granted. The main danger of this approach is the loss of confidence from the representatives of the team. If once the management breaks its obligations, in the future, it is unlikely to be able to count on mutual beneficial cooperation with the staff. Of course, employees will continue to comply with orders from their superiors, however, innovative approaches cannot be expected from them. As a result, the overall effectiveness of the organization will begin to gradually decline, which over time can lead to its decadence and even to the termination of existence. Similar processes take place within the framework of the application of appropriate social technologies. In our view, along with the outlined principles, it is appropriate to allocate the systematic approach. Its

essence lies not only in permanent compliance with obligations, but also in the application of social technologies in conjunction with each other and not in isolation. This will allow the humanization of all aspects of the organization. At the same time, one should not forget that the essence of social technologies lies in “their direct focus on the transformation of social and human relations” [5]. Therefore, it is important to perceive the whole system of institutional association, and not to try to highlight more important elements in it. This approach can also be considered a manifestation of the principle of the systematicity.

***Principle of limitations.*** The application of social technologies in the practice of management of an organization has a number of limitations. For example, “social technology should be recognized as optimal if personal traits of staff are taken into account” [6]. In this case, you cannot focus on the determinants of the development of the organization. In our view, the key requirement in this context is taking into account the views of management office issues, as well as harnessing their creative potential. This is inextricably linked with the humanization of management in the "man - organization" system; moreover, it is its essence. Consequently, the use of social technologies for managing the organization can already be considered as one of the manifestations of the humanistic approach. The main requirement in this case remains the correct definition of the basic principles, by which we specify the principles of systematicity, reflection and conformity.

***General or specific principles.*** These socio-technological principles can be considered general, since they have a direct bearing on the application of social technologies, and also on the process of humanization of relations between a person and organization. Along with them, there are private socio-technological principles that directly determine the choice of a particular social technology used in the indicated organizational conditions. Among these principles, we propose to include the principles of orientation on a person and his needs, maintaining a balance of interests of the individual, organization and society, complementing existing systems of individual, corporate and social values.

The implementation of general socio-technological principles depends on the leadership’s readiness to provide employees with maximum freedom in the framework of their professional activities, as well as the sustainability of the organizational structure through the development of horizontal cooperation of its elements. As a result of this activity, you can count on obtaining significant results in the form of humanization of social management and increasing the effectiveness.

***Principle of reflection.*** Features of the organization’s activities are determined, by the key characteristics of society, in the framework of which of this activity is carried out. In the literature, this aspect is considered for a position of the reflection principle, “which means the need for constant compliance of the organization’s activities with environmental conditions” [7]. In other words, processes in the internal environment similar to those in external environment. When choosing specific social technologies, you must take into account the principle of reflection, which means the need for continuous analysis of the current level of development of society in order to understand the effectiveness of the actions taken. In this, the leader can engage in consultations with representatives of the expert community. Also, in a significant number of cases, he will have to make decisions based on his own judgment. It depends on the right choice of specific social technologies, how quickly the final goal will be achieved in the form of humanization of relations in the “person-organization” system, and whether it will be achieved at all.

The principle of reflection means, they need to understand the level of readiness of society for the perception of innovative managerial ideas. The basis of this readiness is made up of the traditions of management that have developed in society, the mentality of the peoples, and well-established social ideas about what is due. All this is very closely connected with nationally determined models of governance and humanization. For example, the technology of staff self-development at the workplace can be successfully used in an American organization, but it is unlikely to give any significant result in a Japanese company. The fact is the individualism of the Americans and the collectivism of the Japanese, which is reflected in the system of social relations. When applying specific social technologies, employees must understand the essence of what is happening. And for

successful humanization at the same time not only understanding is necessary, but acceptance based on a system of individual values and spiritual attitudes of the person. The perception of the individual characteristics of workers begins with an awareness of the characteristics of the society of which they are represented. This is important for the successful application of specific social technologies of humanization in accordance with the principle of reflection.

**Principle of conformity.** Not every organization can be considered completely ready to update the existing system of interaction. When implementing humanization, it should be taken into account the current state of not only the external, but also the internal environment. In practice, this means applying the principle of correspondence, which is a logical development of the principle of reflection. The essence of the correspondence principle is that specific social technologies of humanization can be applied only if the organization is ready for their perception. In other words, the organization and its team shall comply with the social technologies used, and vice versa. Much attention in this context should be given to the current phase of the organization's life cycle. So, at the initial stages of existence, when there is no good-established staff with a normally functioning system of formal and informal interaction, comprehensive humanization is hardly possible. Accordingly, social technologies based on the significant independence of employees will not bring benefits and may even harm. This situation is more consistent with the organization of master classes and round tables conducted by a professional expert. At the same time, representatives of the team will have opportunities for an exchange of views, but what is happening can be adjusted at any time. Then, as organizational ties strengthen, it is expected to enhance the autonomy of employees and the application of the full range of social technologies. This can be considered as a practical approach to the humanization of relations in the "man - organization" system in line with the application of the general social and technological principle of compliance.

**Competency principle.** An important requirement for the use of social technologies in the organization's activities is that the manager has sufficient qualifications for this. This is especially important in the humanization interactions with humans. Moreover, this is due to the fact that "social technologies have a low coefficient of guarantee of achieving the initial plan" [8, p. 232]. As a result, there is a constant need to adjust the actions taken in accordance with the ways to achieve strategic development goals. In practice, numerous deviations from a predetermined model are possible. This is not surprising: social conditions are constantly changing, and the value systems that are the determinants of the organization as a whole and of its individual employees are also unstable.

In such conditions, it is necessary to ensure the maximum possible openness of the organization for the implementation of continuous information exchange in the internal environment and with the external environment. This is important not only within the framework of strategic goal-setting, but also in the context of the humanization of interacting with a person. In this case, you can use various channels for getting information. However, it is important to understand that the validity of information is directly depends on degree of confidence. Therefore, one cannot rely heavily on data disseminated within informal cooperation of employees. At the same time, it is necessary to constantly monitor the changes in the team. It is possible to take into account both of these requirements in the framework of applying social technologies for the humanization of relations in the "man-organization" system.

**The principle of maintaining balance and interests.** Feedback system in the organization by which employees have the opportunity to directly contact the leadership, tell him their thoughts on the development of the organization is also important. One of the aspects of humanization is the participation of the staff member in the processes of discussion and specific management decision - making. Realizing the principle of observation, a balance of interests of all parties involved, we can propose the use of social technology, which concerning the collective training of a certain scenario for the development of the organization. It is based on the development of a common strategy and the definition of specific actions by the leadership and the team to achieve that objective. This technology combines the positive aspects of feedback and participatory management and also has the additional advantage of a controlled character of the activity of the team representatives.

Practical implementation should not pose serious difficulties. The activity of a modern organization involves the regular holding of a number of corporate events, such as round tables or master classes. During one of them, you can offer to staff members express an opinion in writing on the priorities that the organization should identify, as well as reflecting the strategic goals that should be formulated in accordance with these priorities.

***The principle of expert assessment.*** Then, the data obtained is analyzed by experts, both staff members of the organization and those who are outsourced. The process of selection of experts is very important. There is no doubt that they cannot be appointed by a simple management order, which would contradict the very idea of humanization. In addition, the lack of transparency in the procedure for the presentation of experts will lead to a low level of confidence on the side of the team and will jeopardize the success of technologizing social governance processes. Experts should have credibility among the representatives of the organization, be competent in matters of its activities, formation and development. Representatives of any level of the organizational hierarchy, as well as specialists involved, can meet such requirements. When selecting experts, it should be guided by the opinion of the team representatives obtained during the surveys, questionnaires and feedback systems. The final list of specialists involved in export activities must be approved by the team. Of course, it is a labour—intensive procedure, but without its implementation it is impossible to count on the successful humanization of organizational interaction based on the relevant socio-technological principles.

***Human—centered principle.*** The use of the method of writing scenarios for the development of the organization allows you to activate the internal communication system, the goals of which include “meeting the needs of employees in informal communication, developing a collective consciousness, supporting the equilibrium state of the organization, and, if necessary, innovations, organizational changes” [9]. This corresponds to the principle of focus on the person and his needs. Since the specified event cannot happen once, and as the experts analyze the data, the team will be asked to expand the presented scenarios, supplementing them with specific steps to achieve the stated goals, the interaction between employees that is not directly related to the performance of professional duties will also acquire a systemic pattern. This can be considered as one of the aspects of the application of social technologies, the tasks of which include creating a modus operandi applied in various contexts.

Gradually, the processes of internal communication will become wider, involving all new aspects of the organization. For example, it is possible to reduce the formalization of ongoing training and staff development. These processes can take the form of a direct exchange of knowledge and experience between representatives of the team. Moreover, if in the framework of traditional coaching, the role of the subject is expected to be performed by the most experienced employee or expert, then in the context of humanization, the presence of the subject-subject interaction is expected. Each employee is a hold of unique life and professional experience, as well as innovative ideas, the presence of which does not depend directly on the length of work. There may be a situation where a recently hired employee initiates a number of innovations aimed increasing the efficiency of the organization. Moreover, it is important to note that often these innovations really provide substantial benefits, although it might seem that it is difficult for an inexperienced employee to formulate a truly breakthrough idea. However, we should not forget the importance of the very desire to improve something. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure humanization based on the socio-technological principle of focus on a person and his needs.

***The principle of mutual complementation.*** By implementing of the principle of mutual complementarity of value systems determines the choice of specific social technologies of humanization. In practice, this means that the determinant of all ongoing processes is the existing corporate culture. We have already noted its essence as an association of diverse systems of values, the joint operation of which ensures mutual enrichment. So, the society has an impact on the processes taking place in the internal environment of the organization, and employees adjust their course. At the same time, through the prism of mutual complementation of values, we can consider the social technology of employee self-development. Its essence lies in providing them with

opportunities to independently determine the ways to realize their own creative and innovative potential. In practice, this takes various forms—from transferring them decision—making power in the areas of their professional growth and development to their participation in planning their own careers. Moreover, humanization means the openness of these processes. Only in this case can stability of the collective be maintained and a favorable microclimate in it. This is an essential condition for the existence of an effective and success-oriented organization.

## **Conclusion**

A comprehensive humanization of organizational relations is possible only under the condition of the integrated application of general and private socio-technological principles. It is important to remember that the activity of a modern organization is a complex and multidimensional process, each element of which cannot exist in isolation from others [10]. Therefore, when choosing specific social technologies, it is necessary to take into account a number of factors determined by specific principles. If you lose sight of any aspect, it may turn out that the actions taken will not produce the expected result. To ensure the effectiveness of social technologies in the organization, it must be created certain conditions, based, inter alia, on private social and technological principles.

An analysis of the organization's readiness for the humanization of interaction with employees should begin with determining the conditions for the existence of the team. Each employee should feel comfortable in the workplace in his dealing with colleagues and management. It is also important to monitor development over processes occurring in the internal environment. For this, you can use sociological and management tools: conduct surveys and questionnaires, talk with employees, and carry out on-site monitoring. Of great interest are also interviews with retiring employees. It is important to understand why they decided to leave the organization. If it comes out that the reason for leaving was the uncomfortable social conditions of the team, the leader will have reason to think about the correctness of the chosen engagement strategy. It would be necessary to analyze how the applied social technologies of humanization correspond to the basic principles of their application. It is also important to proceed on the premise that "the goal of the organization's development is primarily to improve the overall organizational climate" [11]. The very necessity for humanization and the need to identify a management strategy in accordance with general and private socio-technological principles should not be called into question.

The reality of the beginning of the third millennium is such that "the concept of management of the 20th century—the century of high technologies (Hi Tech) - in modern management is replaced by the time of high humanitarian technologies (Hi Human Technology)" [12]. A direct consequence of this can be considered the need to update the management system of organizations, the introduction of the most advanced methods that are meet the requirements of modern society. A manifestation of new approaches is the comprehensive humanization of relations in the system of "man—organization." It occurs in accordance with general and private socio-technological principles. Without the use of social technology, it is impossible to imagine the human resources management of a modern organization. A similar approach, in our opinion, can be considered as a key high humanitarian technology that determines the face of the organization's management at the beginning of the 21st century.

In view of the foregoing, we can point to the conclusions:

1. At the current stage, humanization can be considered one of the key imperatives of the transformation of the system of organizational relations.
2. Updating the means and methods employed in managerial activity should take place in accordance with community needs, subject to a balance of interests of the parties involved and on the basis of practical application of the combination of general and private socio-technological principles of humanization.
3. On the one hand, the result of the application of socio-technological principles in the organization's activities should be an update of used management tools and methods, and an increasing overall effectiveness of the existing system of organizational relations based on humanization, on the other hand.

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