



MANAGER COMPETENCE IN THE PRACTICE OF MILITARY MANAGERS - COMMANDERS

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Abstract

The authors highlight the basic approaches to the current modern education of managers in the military environment using managerial competencies of military managers as military commanders of units. In these turbulent time, the interest in the issue related to competences in the military environment has been growing. Continuous organizational changes and frequent transformations in the field of security lead to unpredictable reactions of people, particularly regarding relationship building in military organizations. This leads to the growth of uncertainty and inappropriate responses of people to existing problems. This is primarily related to the personality of a man - commander as well as to his specific behavior. The use of human and intellectual capital, which represents the basis for prosperous organizations, has been increasingly highlighted. The key combat element of the Armed Forces is well – trained personnel. The Slovak Republic has undertaken that the Slovak Armed Forces will have personnel of such quality that will be comparable to the quality level of other NATO member countries and the EU countries. Based on the practical experience of the authors of the Department of Management of the Armed Forces Academy (AFA) of General M.R. Stefanik in Liptovsky Mikulas, educational courses aimed at the development of managerial competencies have been implemented in the context of career education within the AFA.

Keywords: *key competencies, military managers, training, professional soldier, career, education, development, subordination*

1 INTRODUCTION

We are witnessing an enormous increase in successful organizations and the increased interest of other organizations in new inspiration

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and creativity, which they are grateful for their success.

It is mostly related to managerial competencies and managerial experience in the area of leadership. Nowadays, the concept of managerial competencies (Kubes, M., et al, 2004) is quite well known, which we are beginning to apply also in terms of armed SR.

In relation to the military environment, the concepts of manager are increasingly used as a commander, managerial competencies, managerial procedures, and so on. Not surprisingly, because the manager's function in the organization and the unit's commander have many in common, even a few experts share the view that the manager's and commander's functions are identifiable. Finally, when analyzing the functions of a manager, we can associate his / her characteristics with the following: "... a professional management officer who conducts activities to concentrate human and material resources on their coordination in space and time so as to achieve the goals of the institution, to implement a specific project" (Czirak. P. 2004).

In the past, the commander has been guided entirely by other management practices, and now heavily relies on modern management practices that the OS SR gradually applies to their systems, just like controlling or outsourcing. From a strictly authoritative level, it moves forward to participatory management. The commander is required to command, decide, organize, plan, and control at his command and command level. Clearly here we see the merging of managers and commanders. Experts until the end of the 20th century. revealed that the environment requires highly-prepared, managerial thinkers of military professionals who can effectively use limited resources.

2 IDENTIFICATION OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES IN THE MILITARY FIELD

There are military professionals working in the Slovak Republic in various positions. Other competencies are required from the commander and other personnel. It would be mistaken to think that it is enough to create one competency model for the whole SR. In military practice, we are

confronted with the fact that the unit commanders who went to the staff function often had great difficulty adapting and fulfilling completely new types of tasks, and so was otherwise. The staff functions need to have developed organizational talent, know how to plan at the operational level, and manage the burden of working with documentation and regulations (Brezula, J. 2017).

Commanders again need to take responsibility for other members of the unit, social competences, natural authority and rapid decision making. The features and traits of successful managers are now known. Pedler et al. even up to eleven: an overview of the underlying facts, the necessary professional knowledge, non-sensitivity, analytical skills, problem solving and decision-making, learning, social skills and abilities, emotional adaptability, proactivity, creativity, mental arousal, balanced learning habits and skills, self-education (Armstrong, M., 2006).

Even though these are managerial competencies identified by successful managers of civil organizations, they are applicable to the armed SR. They are even competencies that are transferable to the civilian sphere in the event of termination of service and therefore professional soldiers should be motivated.

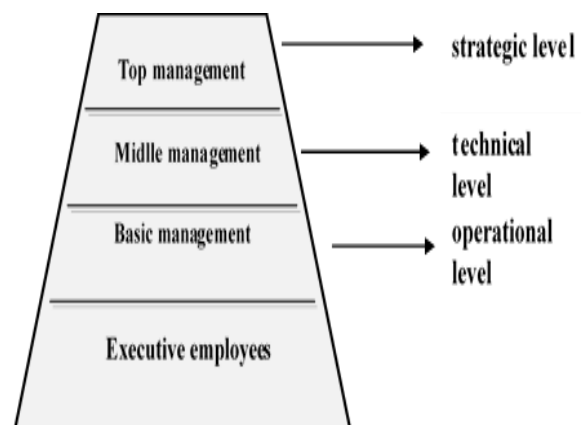


Fig. 1 The Pyramid of Control
(Source: Cimbalnikova 2004, p.16)

In his work, M. Armstrong (2006) supplemented his theory of managerial competencies with his opinion R. Stewart, which gives several key competencies to characterize successful managers: willingness to work hard, endurance and determination, willingness to risk, the ability to create enthusiasm, toughness. These features and capabilities also serve to guide the leader.

The commander must act as a leader in his position. However, many people automatically associate the leader with the concept of a leader. The leader is not the same as a manager. Being a manager does not mean to be a leader! The captain's function is guaranteed by the commander, as he carries out basic management functions - planning, management, organization, and control.

In the literature, we then often meet with the view that a leader is more than a manager because the leader has a vision and pulls the organization forward. Current problems in selecting professional soldiers as Commanders:

1. The commander can come out with people, but is inexperienced on a professional site,
2. The commander is an excellent expert on the issue but cannot lead his subordinates who do not respect or even fight him,
3. The commander is an expert in his field who knows how to work with people but cannot manage himself (self-regulation).
4. All these problems, irrespective of the gravity of the issue, lead to one goal: the commander is unable to fulfill his role at this stage!

Under military conditions, the commander is assisted by a commander, a non-commissioned officer, a company technician, or a non-executive officer, in the sphere of leadership and self-management must rely on their own abilities to gain subordinate authority. The commander must realize that professional soldiers at the lowest level are also an important element of the big chain, and therefore it is important that they pay close attention to their proper leadership. If the commander is a little tough, then there is a danger that the unit will be less disciplined, poorly motivated to well-performing tasks. To show the natural authority requires a leadership personality. Commander - if he is a good leader-leader, he can work with people and can quantify this competence according to the quality of fulfillment of the subordinate tasks. People appreciate it and it can positively influence their work performance. Often the unit commander decides on which function the subordinate is doing.

If the commander is unfair, arrogant, negligent, or lazy, he often comes up with the most capable subordinates. Dissatisfied even if they are able to choose another job because they do not satisfy

the place where they work. Information on such a commander is then disseminated in the armed SR, which damages the good menu of the department. Sometimes even the commander cannot slow down the performance of the entire unit inappropriately by the selected approach. In this case, the commander often chooses to replace the commander and occupy the post. His supervisor, if any, follows the trend that we have found in the SR departments - incompetent, the incompetent soldier has a higher chance of getting to the course to get rid of the commander in time. The number of courses completed affects who will be promoted to a higher position. Thus, one can gain significant competencies, for example, in a language area or other professional area, but will still not have, for example, social concepts. As we have seen in units in the form of interviews, this is a very demotivating approach for competent unit commanders, and the only way to overcome this is that each commander must realize that he is responsible for preparing his subordinates and therefore must seek the way for man to force himself to higher performance through the development of their competencies or dismissal from the armed SR. The goal of using management competencies in the day-to-day unit commanders is to see the following areas:

- make the commander's work more efficient,
- to meet the strategic objectives set out to meet the challenges,
- improve the career development system for military professionals,
- to prepare and train the commanders in the desired direction according to the requirements of the armed SR,
- streamline evaluation system,
- to improve the selection of professional soldiers in leadership positions.

The importance of managerial competencies for this sector

The Slovak Republic considers the basic objective of its defense policy to be the security of its citizens and the defense of the state. It uses individual and collective defense participates in the consolidation of peace and stability in the world and prefers preventive security activities in accordance with international law. The Slovak Republic and its armed forces operate in a strategic environment that is affected by an increase in the extent of asymmetric threats,

terrorism, the increasing threat of weapons of mass destruction, failing states, regional conflicts, radical ideologies and unresolved spores (Model 2015). The Slovak Republic has limited economic means, which is caused by the lower number of professional soldiers serving in the armed SR and lower number of equipment and techniques that could be deployed to the operation if necessary. The more the functioning of the Slovak Republic in limited economic conditions requires the use of the latest management practices in the management of its resources. The decisive combat element of the armed forces is very well-trained personnel. The Slovak Republic has committed itself to the armed SR disposal of such personnel, which will be at a level of quality comparable to that of other NATO and EU member states, which already have learning modules for the development of managerial competencies. The commander of the unit must possess the features, capabilities, and knowledge that will enable him to lead his unit and not only to drive because the competent commander is worthy of following. Managerial competencies are a prerequisite for successfully fulfilling tasks with a great deal of deployment in different operations (situations) in different places (Skolnik, M., Belan, L. 2015).

The share of the management department in managerial competencies

Today, it is well known from the work of successful organizations that according to the focus of the institution, in particular: visions, missions, objectives, specifics and especially according to the type of organization, the most optimal model of education is then chosen in the field of education and consequently its further development. Transformation and reform of military education, military education and training always reflect quantitative and qualitative indicators and development conditions. It turns out that at the military schools, much attention has been paid to technology and technology and attention to management education. From the analysis of the officers' professions, it was clear that all the professions are essentially managerial. The subject of the officer's work is a man and the process of management, therefore the foundation of their education and training must be management (in the sense of not just command), social science, law and leadership, and

everything, including training and training. It turns out that there are only a few typical engineering functions and they also have the character of an operational officer and an officer in these functions manages the service or activities and does not just work on the technique. This means that the new officer also needs some knowledge and skills in managing technical areas, but he needs to have knowledge and skills from management, social science, and leadership.

For these reasons, the Department of Management has concentrated its educational and educational efforts since its inception, apart from its participation in bachelor, master, and doctoral programs within our Academy of the Armed Forces gene. M. R. Stefanik covers and realizes even today life-long - further education of professional soldiers and employees under the title "Key Competencies of the Manager". However, in relation to adult learning, it is important to note that even in our area, it is now most necessary for professional soldiers and employees to gradually learn to "learn" from certain rooted practices, from a "defensive routine.

Based on our knowledge of the opinions and knowledge from developed countries as well as OECD organizations, our own knowledge and the results of research within the OS SR, we have found that the development of personal qualities of commanders - managers - leaders also needs to be ensured.

In the AOS conditions, in close cooperation with the Learning Center, we have "Know How" - 13 years of courses focused on lifelong learning - short-term vocational courses (KOK) under the title "Key Competencies of the Manager". In the form of modular learning, we have begun to professionalize and improve the key competencies of managers, especially in the following modules:

- Module 1: Fundamentals of Management - Effective Manager.
- Module 2: Communication skills of the manager.
- Module 3: Teamwork - building and team leadership.
- Module 4: Managing stress and psychologist of the manager.
- Module 5: New Trends in Manager Training.
- Module 6: Leadership.

Table 1 Composition of course participants

Module	Logged in	Participants	Ø age	Professional soldier	Employees	Education	Full secondary education
1	21	20	32	20	0	18	2
2	23	20	33	20	0	19	1
3	27	23	31	23	0	21	2
4	23	21	37	19	2	16	5
5	22	17	34	17	0	15	2
6	17	16	36	16	0	13	3
Together	133	117	33.8	115	2	102	15

Table 2 Analysis of individual courses

	1. module	2. module	3. module	4. module	5. module	6. module
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Organization of the course	87	84.9	82.9	92.4	77.6	86.4
Taking time	80	88.2	90	92	80.5	89
Study manual	89	92	87	91.2	89.8	93
Mediation of knowledge	85	82.8	76	92	86	93
Teaching methods	88	83	82	94.8	88	90.5
Teacher knowledge and access	85	88	85	90.6	87	96.6
Suitability of the topic selection	81	89	80	91.2	82.3	90
Expansion of theoretical knowledge	79	72	73	90	78	89
Expansion of practical knowledge	69	83	75	90.5	73	88.2
Another benefit of the course for practice	73	90.1	92	89.5	81.2	87.9
Overall satisfaction with the course	80	90.5	88.5	89	82.7	92.8

Later practice has shown that it is necessary to expand these competencies on the issue of the manager's label, human resources management, we are currently considering the issues of military

diplomacy, manager's management, time management, project management as well as about the manager's creativity, which is also necessary for terms of the professionalism of military managers.

The course lasts for 3 to 5 days, part of the course contents are also practical jobs – training and training of managerial skills and competencies. Responses, as well as feedback, are done through an anonymous questionnaire, as well as direct interviews with participants in courses. Graduates talk about satisfaction with the level, content, and methods and forms used in courses. These modules also include courses focusing on financial literacy, environmental management, as well as armament and logistics courses under OS SR. There are also proposals of specialized departments of the department for further issues within the department such as coaching under the conditions of OS SR, specifics of intercultural communication under OS SR, mass media and crisis communication and many more. The suggested trend is definitely correct, and the variety of courses will only grow.

3 OBTAINING MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES IN THE UNIT TRAINING PROCESS

The main objective of the armed SR training, as defined in the Defense Strategy (Defense strategy 2015), is to achieve and maintain the required level of training to fulfill the prescribed mission with an emphasis on NATO's goals with the use of available resources. Problematic in this period is the financial provision of training, which essentially hinders the quality of unit training. Armed Forces training should be ensured by intensive training in accordance with NATO standards, performing joint exercises of combat and support units, increasing the level of command and staff exercises, participating in and using the experience of international exercises, using simulation technologies, and upgrading the training base. However, this is not currently possible due to the budget chapter of the Ministry of Defense. In peacetime, the maintenance of a corresponding degree of operational readiness is considered to be a decisive factor in fulfilling the mission of the armed forces. The armed forces will be personally replenished, trained and equipped

to fit into the following three operational readiness categories, in accordance with NATO rules:

- High-power forces - capable of deploying in a very short time to a wide range of operations, including rapid response forces,
- Forces of lower preparedness - capability of deployment in a relatively short time, with some of these forces being able to fulfill their missions only after completing,
- long-term forces developed - with the capability to provide adequate support to forces deployed in operations after the soldiers have recovered from the backup (Defense strategy 2015).

To that end, we have committed ourselves to entering NATO, although it is currently a very problematic issue from an economic point of view. In practice, substitution activities related to the maintenance of technology and armaments and economic work are often performed instead of planned training. It has a negative impact on the preparedness of our units and their deployment to a real combat situation.

The aim of training in armed SR should be primarily to provide high quality training for all units, to ensure the efficient use of resources, to acquire and maintain training to fulfill specified missions in joint and multinational operations, and to fulfill non-military crisis management tasks in accordance with standards set for their operational readiness. In order to improve their training, the following are also to be observed: "Basic Military Skills Program of the Slovak Republic soldier and small group (team)" SPJ-3-7 Vsevojsk for the preparation of soldiers of all kinds of troops and services within the framework of the armed SR and represent a comprehensive tool for the implementation of bi-lateral preparation at all levels of command of the armed SR (SPJ-3-7: 2009).

The purpose of these programs is to unify the system of conducting basic bi-disciplinary training within the armed SR so that it is finally unified for all departments. Furthermore, it was intended to determine the minimum level of theoretical knowledge and practical skills from individual subjects of all-around training and to lay down the minimum training requirements for the individual when acting alone or in a small group. The conditions for commanders to form the profile of

the professional soldier of the SR are created here. However, they focus on a professional site and not on raising the level of assumptions to achieve this minimum level of training, which would also be a prerequisite for achieving a maximum level of training, even by self-study.

Within the entire armed forces, a system of education based on the development of managerial competencies would allow for the quality of professional service in every area of professional careers. The training of commanders is solved during the training year in the following forms in the form of:

- the methodical preparation of the commanders of wool, squads, and commanders of cooperatives,
- Commander's command preparation,
- Instructional and methodical work.
- In particular, there is a development of professional abilities that move commanders forward at a professional level. We could inspire foreign NATO armies - especially the United States, Great Britain, Germany, France - and their targeted courses to increase the level of managerial competencies, especially leadership (Zibrik, P. 2011).

Armed forces must be prepared to respond flexibly to threats by quickly deploying operations that are practically free of geographical constraints. Depending on the nature of the operations, they will have to have a whole range of capabilities that will enable them to prevail in the decision-making and maneuvering way of conducting combat activity. The competencies of the professional soldiers of the Slovak Republic should be comparable to those of the professional troops of the NATO member states. We have committed to this in our partnership agreements, but we also have to adapt training and material training. According to the Defense Capabilities Strategy, which the armed forces currently need to adopt, they are: deployable to a wide range of operations conducted under diverse geographic and climatic conditions, deployment speeds and mobile the use of information networks for effective decision-making and maximizing the effects of combat activities, effective intelligence, detection, evaluation and assignment of targets, destruction and punctuality, security and resilience, including effective engineering support, air defense, radiation, chemical and biological protection of

forces, in operations, depending on their intensity, scale and pace, adequate contribution to information operations, readiness to use the possibilities of multinational logistics and civil-military cooperation. The required readiness of units and their comparability with other member countries will be achieved by the Armed Forces through an educated and prepared commander's corps, modernized training of combat units with combat support and combat units, their efficient organization, the use of modern technologies, the application of allied and national doctrines. Many military professionals of the armed SR take part in foreign courses focusing on various military fields, resulting in a comparison of the education and training system in the armed SR and other countries. The knowledge gained there is generally good and could serve to bring their experience into practice in the armed SR. Acquiring managerial competencies in the unit training process

4 CONCLUSION

The quality of commanders 'and managers' work is dependent on the prosperity of each organization, that is, our AOS in which we live. In order for each manager, but also a commander in an international and market competitive environment, to be able to withstand and manage a number of management activities, he must constantly develop. The above-mentioned facts convince us even more where to direct our efforts. This is also related to the well-known managerial competencies and qualification standards for managerial work as well as to the specific requirements of the armed SR. The unpredictable security environment and the tasks delegated by the company to the defense sector can only be fulfilled by those members of the department who are well prepared not only theoretically, but who are able to practically solve difficult and often unusual tasks in ensuring the security of the society, protecting the life, health and property of citizens.

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