

## **DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE INTERACTION AT WORK: JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEE'S EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the current economic conditions, companies are acutely concerned with the attraction and the retaining highly qualified experts. The identification and the development of such skills among candidates and employees as the development of effective relationships in a team, the ability to work in teams, and a high adaptability to changing social situations due to the constant changes in business processes are particularly important in the selection and the professional growth of an employee. These skills are the components of the emotional competence of employees. And they can be realized through "job crafting" - an independent change of work conditions and content by an employee in order to increase the importance of work and improve the perception of work tasks and relationships at work. Constantly changing working conditions related to the complexity of business processes, revealed the problem of emotional competence development among employees and the inability of workers to develop effective relationships at a workplace. They studied the models of emotional intelligence by P. Salovey and J. Mayer; R. Bar-On; M. Zaydner, J. Matthews, R. Roberts and K. McCann. They performed the categorical analysis of the following terms: "emotional intelligence", "emotional competence", the similarities and the differences were revealed, which make it possible to assert that the developed emotional competence allows to build an effective interaction between workers in the course of their functional duty performance, increasing labor productivity. The study has been conducted, within the framework of which they revealed the dependence of the relations rethinking by an employee and the development of the emotional competence affecting the efficiency of the business. A new methodology was used during the study - the Rotterdam Scale of Emotional Intelligence, as well as job crafting scale. Practical significance: the main conclusions and provisions of the article can be used to assess the formation of the emotional competence of an employee of any company using the Rotterdam Scale of emotional intelligence as the basis for rethinking the relationship through "job crafting". The use of job crafting scale technique will reveal the degree of staff immersion in the process of relationship rethinking and the skills to relieve the emotional stress at a workplace.

**Keywords:** *interaction, job crafting, employee, emotional competence*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past three decades, most modern organizations have switched from strictly regulated tasks with fixed tasks to dynamic ones with constantly changing components within workflow organization. In such conditions, employees must not only meet formalized requirements both when hiring and when implementing their functionality in the business process, but also be able to rethink the work. Job crafting is characterized not only by rethinking, reassessing and an innovative approach development to the fulfillment of the working functional components, but also by an inspired approach to work, reinforced by inner motivation. An employee who has the ability to rethink his /

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her attitude to day-to-day functional, thereby increasing his own importance of his contribution to the common cause, eventually rebuilds the performed duties to his own values. Thus, there are no internal contradictions, and the performance of work does not require so much effort, which leads to labor activity efficiency increase. One of the areas of personnel management is to promote the rethinking of relations at a workplace. The component of relation rethinking at a workplace is the formation of social interaction, the basis of which is the development of the emotional competence among the participants of this process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

"Job crafting" as a term was proposed in 2001 by American psychologists J. Dutton and E.V. Wrzesniewska and characterizes the state of an employee who actively revises and changes his work to make it more meaningful for himself (Wrzesniewski A., Dutton J.E., 2001). This process includes an effective performance of functional duties via the means unregulated by a company, the creation of a positive sense in a work, the formation of positive emotions and a high quality of professional relationships in an organization. The study of employee relationships to their work, the assessment of their role in a company work, led to the conclusion that the employees who were aware of their work importance and could determine their contribution to the results of an organization were characterized by the involvement and implemented their professional activities more effectively than those who considered his work boring and unimportant (Tims M., Bakker A.B. and others 2013). The employees expanded their functional duties independently and approached their tasks creatively, and thus had a variety of professional experience and were the experts in professional matters (Wrzesniewski A., LoBuglio N. et al. 2013, p.285). The main characteristic of "job crafting" is that employees change their tasks or other performance characteristics on their own initiative (Tims M., Bakker A.B., Derks D., 2012, p.174). Besides, the theory of job crafting was advanced that the optimization of the workflow is the way of its work value increase (Wrzesniewski A., LoBuglio N. et al., 2013; Morrow D.L., Conger S., 2018). Through the individualization of labor, workers take steps to increase the value of their work by changing the content or the approach to work tasks and finding problems or resources (Tims, M., Derks, D., Bakker, A.B., 2016). The workflow optimization is the strategy that employees use to change and improve working conditions. In particular, seeking to find new working tools and work tasks, they form a more attractive working environment (Tims, M., Bakker A.B., Derks, D., 2012). The employees who create working conditions independently in accordance with their needs behave purposefully, which leads to the sense of the work importance and is the component of the work motivational potential. Job crafting is seen as the ability to reframe complex or ambiguous situations, tasks and relationships through personal values to achieve the outcome effectively (Harju L.K., J.J. Hakanen, W.B. Schaufeli, 2016).

Studying the "rethinking of work" for several years, scientists tried to use its components in the management of human resources. J. Berg, J. Dutton, E. Wrzesniewska and A. Bäckker proposed the concept of "job crafting exercise" (Berg J.M., Dutton J.E. and others 2008), M. French proposed the concept of "job crafting intervention" (JCI) (French M., 2010). JCI implies the provision of a full range of technical conditions and practical recommendations to the staff by managers, allowing an employee to perform the work in accordance with the expected results. This concept can be considered as "the facilitation of a work rethinking" on the part of the HR manager who directs an employee using any method of "job crafting" (Wingerden J., Bakker A.B., Derks D., 2017 c.168). There are three different ways that you can use in the context of "work rethinking" (Berg J.M., Wrzesniewski A., Dutton J.E. 2010):

- 1) the rethinking of tasks involves the changing the task boundaries by changing the scope and the method of these tasks performance;
- 2) the rethinking of relations involves the revision of social relations that exist at a workplace, by changing the level or the nature of interactions with colleagues. It is necessary to review our working relations, giving each communication the meaning and the purpose of interaction. Changing the meaning of social relations presupposes their rebuilding in a positive way, interacting with those who can provide new information, experience and assistance in personal professional goal achievement;

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3) the reinterpretation of perception involves the change of all his work perception.

Social skills in the context of "job crafting" are considered as the ability to identify, understand and manage social interaction effectively (Ferris, Witt & Hochwarter, 2001; Sekiguchi T., Li J., Hosomi M., 2017). The rethinking of relationships is possible with the emotional competence of an employee and developed emotional intelligence. In scientific research various models and concepts of emotional intelligence have been discussed for more than three decades. In 1983, the psychologist G. Gardner proposed the theory of multiple intellects. He substantiated that people possess eight relatively autonomous intellects, including intrapersonal and interpersonal (Gardner, H., 1983). In recent years, there is a constantly growing scientific interest in the study of emotional intelligence as the competence of an effective evaluation and the management of one's emotions, the regulation of social interaction and emotional behavior both of one's own and of another person (Petrides K.V., 2011, Zeidner M., Roberts R.D. & Matthews G., 2008).

P. Salovey and J. Mayer proposed the definition of emotional intelligence as "the ability to control one's own emotions, to identify their emotions and the emotions of other people, to use the obtained information to determine their further actions" (Salovey, P., & Mayer, J.D., 1990). Originally the model by P. Salovey and J. Mayer reflected only the cognitive abilities associated with the processing of information about emotions. The model included three categories of adaptive abilities: the evaluation and the expression of emotions, the regulation of emotion and the use of emotions in problem solution. Later this definition was improved and included four components that characterize emotional intelligence: identification, understanding, management and the use of emotions to achieve the goal (Mayer J.D., Salovey P., 1997). According to this model, the first and the second components correlate with the area of emotional intelligence, while the third and fourth components belong to the strategic area of emotional intelligence. The authors created the first test "MSCEIT - Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence", during which they assessed the ability to identify emotions in individuals, cultural artifacts, as well as to determine their own emotions through the performance of tasks. Scientists have proposed the following interpretation of "emotional intelligence" - a series of interrelated skills that allow people to process emotionally relevant information effectively (Mayer J.D., Caruso D.R., Salovey P., 1999). Thus, a person with a developed emotional intelligence can use emotions, even negative ones, and manage them to achieve their goals. In 1995 D. Goleman introduced the changes in the basic model by P. Salovey and J. Mayer, adding it with such characteristics as enthusiasm, perseverance and social skills (Goleman D., 2010). In 1997 R. Bar-On introduced the term "the coefficient of emotionality" and developed the questionnaire EQ-i (Emotional Quotient Inventory) for its definition (Bar-On, R., 1997). Within the framework of R. Bar-On Model, emotional intelligence was viewed as a multi-factorial structure where emotional, personal and social competencies converge and determine the ways by which a person develops relationships with other people (Bar-On, R., 2006). R. Bar-On argued, that emotional intelligence develops over time, changes, and can be improved by mastering various training programs.

Within the framework of the model of abilities that underlie emotional intelligence, M. Zeidner, J. Matthews, R. Roberts and K. McCann have singled out the following: EI as temperament, EI as a conscious regulation of emotions, EI as a skill system (Zeidner M., Matthews G., Roberts R.D., McCann C., 2003). It is the latter component that echoes with "emotional competence". In recent years, more and more foreign and Russian researchers focus their attention on the fact that the term "emotional intelligence" relates primarily to leadership, stress management, while the term "emotional competence," through which EI is determined, reflects interaction of employees more accurately in the course of current task performance (Cherniss, C., 2010). Scientists note that the knowledge and the identification of emotions do not always correlate with the ability to use this knowledge in practice, while emotional competence in 1998 was defined by D. Goleman as "the acquired ability on the basis of EI as the result of outstanding performance indicators" (Goleman D., 1998). Speaking about competence, R. Boyatzis noted that this is the main characteristic of a person, which allows him to carry out effective activities (Boyatzis R.E., 2008). Competence is defined as a worker's ability to apply acquired skills and abilities in professional activities (Yakimova Z.V., Nikolaeva V.I., 2012). Emotional competence is defined as a group of developing abilities for self-

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regulation and the regulation of interpersonal relations by understanding personal emotions and the emotions of others (Yusupova G.V. 2014). At the psychological level, the expressed emotional competence provides a higher self-esteem, the satisfaction with life, and a lesser susceptibility to professional burnout (Brasseur S., Grégoire J. et al., 2013). At the social level, the formed emotional competence makes it possible to create effective social interactions, including the provision of the executed work high quality, first of all for the workers in the service sector (Nelis D, Quoidbach J. et al., 2011). One of the ways "job crafting" involves the relations that exist in a workplace by changing the level or the nature of interactions with colleagues and their rebuilding in a positive way. Without a formed emotional competence of an employee it is impossible to rethink relations in a work collective for their effective alignment in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of business processes (Tsareva N.A., Erokhin A.K., 2018).

It is important for an employer to assess the level of the emotional competence of an employee and to promote its development if it is not developed. The level of emotional competence development will allow to predict the possibility of job crafting use - the rethinking of relations - in the course of teamwork and group work performance on projects. In 2017, Dutch scientists developed the Rotterdam Scale of Emotional Intelligence (REIS) (Pekkar K.A., Bakker A.B., 2018). K. Pekkar, A. Becker, D. van de Linden and M. Born proposed an evaluation technique to measure emotional intelligence, taking into account its four components: identification, understanding, management and the use of emotions for a goal achievement. The third and fourth unit of statements allow to evaluate the formation of an employee emotional competence. The approbation of the methodology was carried out during the survey of 393 people. The result of which is the statement number reduction from 28 to 7 statements in each unit related to the component of emotional competence. The participants defined the attitude to the proposed statements in the questionnaire via the Likert scale: from 1 (absolutely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). The finalized methodology was proposed to 2,728 employees of Dutch companies, mainly operating in healthcare, education, and services. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for each of the four units was 0.82; 0.85; 0.80; 0.82. The study of "work rethinking" is carried out using the technique of Job crafting scale (JCS). The approbation of the methodology was carried out not only in the USA and European countries, but also in China, South Africa, Japan, Russia (Tims M., Bakker A.B., Derks D., 2012; Tsareva N.A., 2017).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the framework of the author's research, the determination of emotional competence level and "work rethinking" was carried out using the methods of Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale (REIS) and Job crafting scale (JCS). The third and fourth unit of Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale - the management and the use of emotions to achieve the goal - allow to assess the formation of an employee emotional competence. The "Job crafting" scale was used by us to identify the readiness for worker "work rethinking", in particular, to "rethink relations". The questions of the scale are aimed at behavior revealing caused on their own initiative to reconcile the working environment and employer's expectations with opportunities and preferences to achieve the set goals. The authors conducted the survey of Russian company employees using these methods. The study involved 189 people, including 73 men (39%) and 116 women (61%); with higher education - 67.2%, unfinished higher education - 9.5%, secondary vocational education - 21.2%, secondary education - 2.1%. The age of respondents: under 35 - 67%, over 36 - 33%. The work experience from 1 to 3 years - 16.4%, from 4 to 10 years - 47.1%, more than 10 years - 36.5%. Sphere of activity: production - 20.6%, communications - 19.6%, health care - 16%, services - 15%, trade - 12.7%, catering - 9.5%, etc. The surveys of middle managers were processed separately. The results of emotional competence degree development study among the employees of Russian companies are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Results of the survey according to the methodology Rotterdam Scale of Emotional Intelligence (REIS)

Question number	Identification of emotions	Question number	Understanding of emotions	Question number	Emotion management	Question number	The use of emotions to achieve the set goal
1.	3,73	8.	3,30	15.	<b>3,45</b>	22.	2,91
2.	<b>3,87</b>	9.	3,17	16.	3,20	23.	3,05
3.	3,83	10.	3,30	17.	3,35	24.	3,08
4.	3,81	11.	<b>3,83</b>	18.	3,27	25.	2,91
5.	3,77	12.	3,35	19.	3,33	26.	<b>3,43</b>
6.	3,83	13.	3,31	20.	3,29	27.	3,13
7.	3,53	14.	3,24	21.	3,34	28.	<b>3,43</b>
Average value	<b>3,77</b>		<b>3,36</b>		<b>3,32</b>		<b>3,19</b>
The average value according to the questionnaires of 90 middle managers	<b>3,78</b>		<b>3,45</b>		<b>3,43</b>		<b>3,29</b>

According to the results of the study conducted by the authors, the highest average value is the identification of one's own emotions, the lowest one is the use of emotions to achieve the goal. This reflects an insufficient development of emotional competence among employees in general. Note that these figures are higher (0,09 - 0,11) for middle managers. The maximum value in the first unit of the statement "I can identify my own emotions", in the second - "I can sympathize with people around me", in the third - "I control my own emotions", in the fourth - "I know what to do to improve the mood of people" and "I'm able to calm others." The use of this technique will allow to assess the emotional competence of employees, revealing the unformed components of emotional intelligence in a unit: identification, understanding, management and the use of emotions to achieve the goal. The data from "work rethinking" survey by the employees of Russian companies show the changes made on a periodic basis by the employees in their structural resources, stress reduction, relationship rethinking, and the rethinking work tasks (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Results of the survey according to the scale of "work rethinking" (job crafting)

Question number	Increase of structural resources	Question number	Stress reduction	Question number	Improvement of social relations	Question number	Work task complication
1.	3,62	6.	<b>3,26</b>	11.	3,07	16.	3,28
2.	<b>3,67</b>	7.	2,90	12.	2,97	17.	<b>3,43</b>
3.	3,66	8.	2,87	13.	3,15	18.	3,39
4.	3,46	9.	2,89	14.	2,88	19.	<b>3,43</b>
5.	3,49	10.	3,13	15.	<b>3,21</b>	20.	3,05
Average value	<b>3,58</b>		<b>3,01</b>		<b>3,056</b>		<b>3,316</b>
The average value according to the questionnaire of 90 middle managers	<b>3,69</b>		<b>3,08</b>		<b>3,158</b>		<b>3,482</b>

The analysis of the obtained results indicates that the employees of the surveyed Russian companies try most of all to make changes in structural resource increase. The lowest value is observed in "stress reduction" scale. This indicator includes the following changes: the efforts aimed at making their work less stressful in terms of emotions; the reduction of contacts with people who adversely affect the work process; the search for a feedback on the results of work from a leader and colleagues; the preference is not to take complex decisions that emotionally drain an employee. The only thing that employees do to rethink the job - "job crafting" - is the use of the opportunity to get inspiration from a direct supervisor (question 13) and seek advice from colleagues (question 15). The employees of companies, especially the employees of the front office and mid-level managers, face emotional stress every day in the performance of their functional duties and at the moment make the least efforts to improve the situation. There is a direct correlation between these two tables. A constant emotional stress with an insufficient development of emotional competence in the part "The use of emotions to achieve this goal" carries certain risks, since, being exhausted emotionally, an employee can leave a company in search of less intense work. The identified situation can be changed by using the concept of "job crafting intervention", where the task of a HR manager will be to find the ways to make an employee to "rethink his work" to relieve stress, while developing emotional competence, including the understanding of other employee emotions and using the influence on emotional background of the surrounding to achieve the company effective goals.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, changing working conditions, its intensity and tension, almost in all spheres of activity, make new demands on the professional competence of employees. One of the most important components is the emotional competence of the employee, which allows an employee to use knowledge about his emotions and others not only to manage emotions, but also to develop social interaction in order to achieve the indicated goals. Professional competence must be developed for each employee, mastering emotional competence. The diagnosis of an employee competence level using also the

Rotterdam Scale of Emotional Intelligence (REIS) and the scale of "job crafting", will allow to take into account the unformed components of the emotional competence and provide appropriate training for its employees. HR manager can promptly diagnose the level of emotional competence formation and the ability to rethink relations in the course of building communications within the framework of team, project work in an organization and, if necessary, to fill in the missing components during trainings, seminars and conversations. The heads of organizations that wish to implement the "job crafting intervention" strategy to increase the efficiency of their employees should be focused on initiative support from personnel, autonomy, a positive atmosphere creation, the creation of conditions for value management (Yakimova Z.V., Tsareva N.A., 2017). In the created conditions, there will be self-initiated transformations, the transformations initiated by an employee, introduced into the working functional, which will result in business process efficiency increase.

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