

NEW APPROACHING IN MANAGING ROLES

Marius GULUTA

Școala Doctorală a Facultății de Textile, Pielărie și Management Industrial
Universitatea Tehnică “Gh. Asachi” Iași, Romania

ABSTRACT

The world economic crisis has caused profound shifts at all levels of the society, pushing most of the economic entities to adapt to new realities of the market.

The changes occurred often hit the emotional and professional concerns of the entire staff in a company. During this process, the managers and employees that lead and implement such decisions, cope with unpleasant postures and alarming prospective, and also inherent issues and conflicts, due to a psychological dynamic that appears and serves to stated or hidden goals. They are restless about a specific change and feel threaten of its possible consequences, tending to preserve their attitudes and opinions regarding the changing agenda.

Related to decisional roles that subscribe the managing behavior, the present article aims to analyze a new approach in management, namely - transforming the “problem solver” role into a “crisis solver” one, by taking into consideration the psychodynamics and the inclusion mechanism into organization.

KEYWORDS: *crisis, problem, conflict, change, role, psychodynamic, involve, inclusion*

During the organizational changes, the employees cope with unpleasant postures and alarming prospective. They are restless and feel threaten of a specific change and its known or unknown consequences, assuming that the decisional meetings between them and managers are quite embarrassing and difficult. The staff express own feelings and ideas but their members still tend to preserve attitudes and opinions regarding the changing program, talking behind with the purpose of clarifying a common position.

The employees who attempt to involve into decisional activities, develop such behaviors when they belong to groups or when they act on behalf of groups. Therefore, these motivational forces operate into groups, among groups and at organizational level as a body. This kind of behavior, less conscious than political goals and tactics, is motivated by some forces that must be considered as *psychological dynamics*.

One of the most used terms related to psychological behavior in groups is psychodynamic of the systems. The term is borrowed from the psychology of the human being and it is mentioned in order to describe the stimulating and motivational forces resulted from the interconnection of different parts and features of human personality. Here, the concept of *system* signalizes the connected parts of a organizational whole. That's why the psychodynamic of the systems provides a

vision of the motivational forces, born from the connection of the different groups of a system. (Miller, 1990, p. 89).

These intense dynamics are part of organizational systems and could become dysfunctional, especially in the frame of confused postures. In this matter, the classic managing approach does not run properly anymore and the manager face with *crisis situation*, individually speaking, as a personal status when “a human being face an obstacle in order to accomplish an important goal of his life, but which cannot be got over by using the common methods of problem solving”. This attempt leads to a lack of organizing when the person involved is desperate to try certain options”. (Dafinoiu, 1999, p. 112).

Although the person (manager or employee) feels an *internal* conflict as a psychological status of tension and psychic lack of comfort, the *crisis situation* changes into an *external* conflict which becomes the main topic for the organizational dynamic. External conflicts - „a changed, affected, altered and negative form of social and human relationships as they are accepted or expected to be into the culture or the community ” (Stoica Constantin, 1999, p. 4), - have some stages of genesis, growing and developing, as follows:

- (1) Differences in terms of culture, personality, interests, values, status or power, access to resources. These are not necessary causes of conflict, they can be sources of conflict if they are not respected, valued or understood. Differences regard the tolerance or acceptance of someone’s differences;
- (2) Disagreements can occur when people compare or contrast their preferences and priorities. They disagree, but it is an inconsequential disagreement. Even if they disagree on trivial matters, they can still agree to disagree;
- (3) Problems. When a party acts on a difference or a disagreement and that action has consequences for another party, a problem can occur. Problems could be avoided, but they are really part of life. Our daily lives can be seen as a series of unsolved problems. At this stage the emotional field is engaged;
- (4) Disputes when more than one party acknowledges the difference and the problem occurred. At least one party wants to solve the issue, but the solutions proposed tend not to take into account the other party/s interests;
- (5) Conflicts when both parties are engaged in the situation, both perceive that their goals are incompatible and both think in terms of “winning” or “not losing”;
- (6) Violence. In order to win, parties try to damage, hurt or exploit resources or each other. Violence operates on physical, emotional or psychological levels. At this stage, the differences that led to this point may be forgotten, ignored or distorted.

In this frame of organizational unrest, the *psychodynamic concept of inclusion* suggests a fundamental task in charge of the champions of change.

Inclusion means “the treatment of the emotional issues, by assuring an inclusion frame in which the natural development processes may state again”. (Philips, 1988, p. 98). The agents of change must accept the emotional expressions of the employees, as a reaction at the radical changing, by providing plenty of space and time for analysis.

The mechanism of inclusion is more important as the pressure of a group or collectivity is higher. This pressure of the group is able to end sometimes with a *unitary behavior* (Neculau, 1996, pg.237), asking for harmony or balance in order to accept or comply with a change. Such behaviors are usually known as *resistance against change*. They often state throughout a defensive behavior of the employees, by issuing conflicts into organizations or finding the guilty persons.

Other authors (Kolb and Glidden, 1986, pp. 77-90) illustrate that the *problem solver role* of the manager encourages the information traffic among groups or parties, making them aware of perceiving rather the other party’s interests than positions. The roles of the managers become more complex translating from *problem solver* role to *crisis solver* one, namely conflicts and disputed decisions that need to be mediated and implemented. The motivation of the managers for settling by all means, the sudden and unexpected approach of changing, makes the employees suspicious and they may determine cohesion meant for resistance.

Analyzing the managers’ behaviour, Henry Mintzberg (1973, p. 211) admitted that the mediating activity as a third party, consumes a lot of resources of time and efforts for the managing activities. Mintzberg ascribes to the manager the following roles (fig.1).

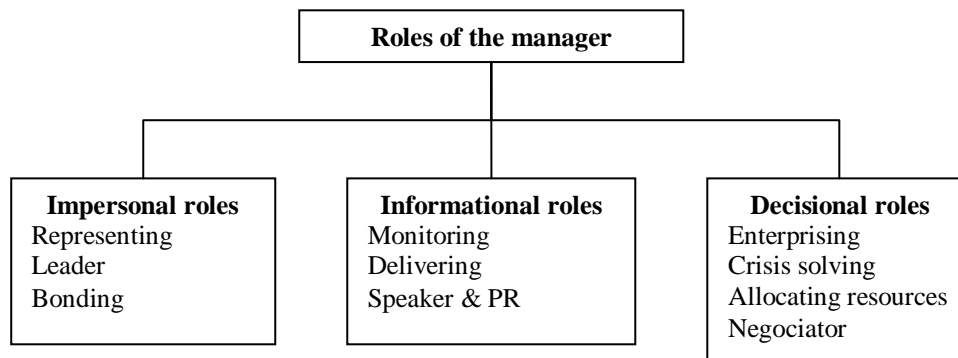


Figure 1 Managing roles

Below, we intend to enrich the managing role of *crisis solver* from the *inclusion concept* point of view, by enlightening some prescriptions:

- (1) Involving the employees in detailed planning and the implement of changes. Although the leaders of the organization are aware of the goals, they cannot have a clear vision upon the specific changes that might be put into practice;
- (2) Gaining a participative attitude from the employees. An uncertainty direction to follow can be easily fought against by calling the support

of the staff. That's why the support of the employees in for implementing the changing program decreases the anxiety and the resistance at change;

- (3) Encouraging the employees to express their emotions and feelings related to the changing agenda. Most of the times, managers feel themselves unprepared to provide a fearless and safety frame, where feelings can be explored;
- (4) Stating the intention of solving different matters as an objective and general interest. The management communicates his availability of adopting decisional criteria that reflects also the employees' interests in designing and implementing changes. The decisional process and its results are according to the objective standards generally accepted (Milles, 1980, pg.160);
- (5) Assuming the roles that include embarrassing and disturbing emotions themselves and for the group. During the organizational changes, the managers must assume roles that involve emotions which generate lack of comfort and anxiety;
- (6) Approaching the content of the disagreements efficiently regarding the measures of implementing the change into organization. Of course, the managers may exaggerate the psychological dynamics when they do not succeed in designing efficacious mechanism for solving the conflicts produced as a result of the changing agenda.

The organizational changing determines a different impact on groups inside, affecting the persons' beliefs profoundly, especially the authority, status, power and resources. In spite of this, many managers do think that it is quite difficult to assure an *inclusion frame*, performing most of the times a political role in the frame of the decisional discussions in order to facilitate a certain process of changing. The managers also face difficulties in mixing tasks of inclusion with taking political decisions, tending to organize meetings as only their concerns are legitimate actions.

Developing long term relationships with the employees, we should stipulate that managers cannot be associated with a third party as a non-interfering role, because they are fully interested in the final result of the process. They are most closely to a *crisis solver role as a second party or any other party involved at the same or a different level*, trying to deal with conflicts and decisional disputes generated by the imperious change, together with the staff involved.

Plenty of changing programs record expensive delays of implementing, because of the emotional and political unsolved disputes. Managers must ensure an inclusion frame of the psychodynamics, providing proper mechanisms of solving disputed decisions. Solving the emotional problems seems to show up only when the managers' anxieties diminished or when the managers allow *step by step* approaching of the emotional and political problems, in the same time. Such actions do not permit a more efficiently analysis of the disputed decisions and emotional disorders.

During the organizational changes, these items turn up into two issues which are related but separated. Inclusion is not the same thing as solving the political tasks, although inclusion may be the result of it. In spite of this, the political problems which need decisions to take cannot be accomplished only by inclusion.

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