Mukhtarova K.[1], Chukubaev Ye.[2],
Yerimpasheva A.[3], Soloaga Aurora Díaz[4]

[1]Doctor of economic sciences, professor, e-mail: kmukhtarova@rambler.ru
[2]Candidate of historical sciences, e-mail: simonoberto1901@gmail.com
al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan, Almaty
[3]Candidate of economic sciences, associate professor, University of International Business,
Kazakhstan, Almaty, e-mail: aidayerimpasheva@gmail.com
[4]Foreign lecturer of Almaty Management, University Carlos III,
Spain, Madrid, e-mail: auroradiazs@gmail.com

THE SOFT SKILLS CONCEPT
IN ORGANIZATIONS AND PROJECT TEAMS

Modern challenges take place in markets force the companies' management to cope with risks and uncertainty. To forward competitive advantages, it is important to develop skills necessary to solve emerging problems. The authors attempted to reveal needed soft skills to manage organizations effectively. The purpose of scientific research is to study the degree of awareness concerning the soft skills concept among Kazakhstani employees. Due to the selected survey approach, the data are reliable but exploratory one. Thus, representative data is needed to confirm the findings.

Online survey with the nonrepresentative sample of employed people working in business companies was conducted. There were two stages of the research. The first stage was exploratory secondary research. Secondary data helped to propose the hypothesis that poor soft skills lead to poor performance of any activity where people interact. Findings taken from online survey showed that 54.8 % of respondents consider that soft skills are important. 64.5% claimed that low level of awareness on soft skills leads to poor performance. There can be no doubt that awareness of employees on soft skills will increase their personal performance. Within the paper, the discussion focuses on the importance for Kazakhstani entrepreneurs, businesspersons and employees to develop soft skills to expand boundaries of career opportunities.

Key words: soft and hard skills, leadership, innovators, change, project, team.

Мұхтарова Қ.[1], Чукубаев Е.[2],
Еримпашева А.[3], Солоага Аврора Диас[4]

[1]экономика ғылымдарының докторы, профессор, e-mail: kmukhtarova@rambler.ru
[2]тарих ғылымдарының кандидаты, e-mail: simonoberto1901@gmail.com
әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университеті, Қазақстан, Алматы қ.
[3]экономика ғылымдарының кандидаты, доцент, Халықаралық бизнес университеті,
Қазақстан, Алматы қ., e-mail: aidayerimpasheva@gmail.com
[4]Алматы Менеджмент Университетінің шетел оқытушысы, Университет Карлос III,
Испания, Мадрид қ., e-mail: auroradiazs@gmail.com

**Ұйымдар және жобалардың командалардағы
икемді дағдылар тұжырымдамасы**

Нарықтағы қазіргі қиындықтар компаниялардың басшылығына тәуекелдер мен белгісіздікке қарсы тұруға мәжбүр етеді. Бәсекелестік артықшылықтарды дамыту үшін, пайда болған проблемаларды шешуге қажетті дағдыларды дамыту маңызды. Авторлар ұйымдарды тиімді басқару үшін қажетті икемді дағдыларды анықтауға тырысады. Ғылыми зерттеулердің мақсаты қазақстандық қызметкерлер арасында икемді дағдылар тұжырымдамасына қатысты хабардарлық дәрежесін зерттеу болып табылады. Таңдалған зерттеу әдісінің арқасында деректер сенімді, бірақ барлаушы болып табылады. Осылайша, деректерді растау үшін өкілетті деректер қажет.

Бизнес-компанияларда жұмыс істейтін үлгісімен онлайн сауалнама жүргізілді. Зерттеудің екі кезеңі болды. Бірінші кезең екінші зерттеуді іздестіру болды. Екінші деректер гипотезаны ұсынуға көмектесті: нашар икемді дағдылар адамдар өзара әрекеттесетін кез келген қызметтің нашар нәтижесіне әкеледі. Онлайн-сауалнамадан алынған мәліметтер көрсеткендей, респонденттердің 54,8% икемді дағдыларды маңызды деп санайды. Респонденттердің 64,5% икемді дағдылар туралы хабардарлықтың төмен деңгейі нашар өнімділікке әкеледі деп

мәлімдеді. Қызметкерлердің икемді дағдылар туралы хабардарлығы олардың жеке өнімділігін арттыратыны күмән жоқ. Мақалада пікірталас қазақстандық кәсіпкерлерге, бизнесмендерге және қызметкерлерге мансаптық мүмкіндіктердің шекараларын кеңейтуге икемді дағдыларды дамытуға арналған.

Түйін сөздер: икемді және қатал дағдылар, көшбасшылық, инноваторлар, өзгерістер, жобалар, команда.

Мухтарова Қ.[1], Чукубаев Е.[2],
Еримпашева А.[3], Солоага Аврора Диас[4]

[1]доктор экономических наук, профессор, e-mail: kmukhtarova@rambler.ru
[2]кандидат исторических наук, e-mail: simonoberto1901@gmail.com
Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, Казахстан, г. Алматы
[3]кандидат экономических наук, доцент, Университет международного бизнеса,
Казахстан, г. Алматы, e-mail: aidayerimpasheva@gmail.com
[4]иностранный преподаватель, Алматы Менеджмент Университет, Университет Карлос III,
Испания, г. Мадрид, e-mail: auroradiazs@gmail.com

Концепция гибких навыков
в организациях и командах проектов

Современные проблемы, имеющие место на рынках, заставляют руководства компаний справляться с рисками и неопределенностью. Для продвижения конкурентных преимуществ важно развивать навыки, необходимые для решения возникающих проблем. Авторы пытаются раскрыть необходимые навыки для эффективного управления организациями.

Целью научных исследований является изучение степени осведомленности казахстанских работников о концепции гибких навыков. Благодаря выбранному подходу данные исследования являются надежными, но предварительными. Таким образом, требуются последующие исследования с репрезентативной выборкой для подтверждения результатов.

Был проведен онлайн-опрос нерепрезентативной выборки из работающих в бизнес-компаниях. Исследование состояло из двух этапов. На первом этапе проведено поисковое вторичное исследование. Вторичные данные помогли выдвинуть гипотезу: отсутствие гибких навыков приводит к низкой продуктивности любой деятельности, где работники взаимодействуют. Результаты интернет-опроса показали, что 54,8% респондентов считают, что гибкие навыки важны. 64,5% заявили, что низкий уровень осведомленности о гибких навыках ведет к снижению продуктивности. Несомненно то, что осведомленность сотрудников о гибких навыках повышает их личную эффективность. В рамках статьи обсуждается важность развития гибких навыков казахстанскими предпринимателями, бизнесменами и сотрудниками для расширения возможностей карьерного роста.

Ключевые слова: гибкие и жесткие навыки, лидерство, инноваторы, изменения, проект, команда.

Introduction

Contemporary challenges facing modern organization force its management to deal with changes, projects, innovations or start-ups. To maintain competitive advantages, it is important to develop skills necessary to solve emerging problems. The paper aims to discuss these issues. The authors have attempted to reveal leadership skills that are primarily needed to manage organizations effectively. This study applies the significance of soft skills and identifies what skills should be perceived as soft ones. In contemporary organizations, it is essential that managers possess particular skills to lead. Ideally, a manager should have the necessary skills at a sufficient level to lead employees of an organization. Good leadership development should concentrate on the skills required to deal with changes, implement projects or launch start-ups. Any leadership development program must deal with how to enhance commitment of employees to the organization and help to cultivate the entrepreneurial or participative cultures depending on the request.

The aim of the research is to explore the soft skills acquisition of employees and to determine the importance of soft skills in organizations and companies. The subject of the research paper is soft skills. The theory of leadership generalizes the practical experience of hundreds and thousands of people. Contemporary organizations to improve their effectiveness should focus on developing leadership skills, in particular soft skills, which are a reflection of the organization's culture and strategy. Training personnel, raising their awareness and implementing a leadership effectiveness

programs are further directions to develop and enhance soft skills. The test units of the research paper are Kazakhstani employed people working in organizations and companies.

Materials and Methods

For the data collection, an online survey was conducted. The questionnaires were distributed among Kazakhstani employees via Google Survey and Monkey Survey. The participants were recruited out of the pool of the respondents and satisfied certain criteria, such as being employed with a minimum of three years of work. The research was an exploratory one. Online survey is based on the convenience sample of nonprobability sampling technique (Malhotra, 2013, Gupta, 2004). The survey was conducted very fast because sampling units gave their responses at once. In spite of these advantages, the convenience sample has serious limitations. Primarily the resulting sample are not representative of the target population. As a result, the sampling process could suffer from selection bias. Because of these limitations, it would be difficult to generalize the results of the research to the whole population. To overcome these disadvantages the descriptive or causal research are needed additionally. The Russian language was used. Structured multiple-choice, dichotomous, and Likert scale were used. A multiple cross-sectional design of the survey with an n=231 employees working in various organizations was used. Before the online surveys, the hypothesis was proposed. It was: poor soft skills lead to poor performance of any activity where people interact.

The comprehensive analysis of secondary data helped to interpret primary data with more insight. Findings taken from online survey showed that half of the respondents are informed on soft skills. 64.5% claimed that low level of awareness on soft skills will lead to poor performance.

In addition, the qualitative findings revealed the importance aspects of soft skills acquisition are: (i) delivery of effective and quality performance; (ii) career development and enrichment, and (iii) managing employees' skills. In summary, the findings contribute to training, and provide significant pronouncements towards the development of soft skills.

Literature review

Let us provide a list of soft skills that are important for collaboration and teamwork, based on experience of various authors. Leadership soft skills are very beneficial for administering organization effectively and efficiently (Ariratana, Sirisookslip & Ngang, 2015, p. 331).

The realization of leadership is possible due to two components: a suitable environment and the availability of personal qualities of the leader. The suitable environment for the realization of leadership includes organizational culture and structure, availability of resources, and delegation of authority. However, without the leader's distinctive interpersonal skills, the presence of external environment is not enough (Cotrell, 2005, 2008).

According to Blumberg M. (2013) the hardest job in management is the «first time CEO» and «at least 75% of first time CEO's fail.» In fact, human resources management is a complex and responsible work. Blumberg M. (2013, p. xxiii) suggests: «Ask for help from your board and get coaching and mentoring... And don't let the fear of failure get in the way». In this regard, Heath Ch. & Heath D. (2010) have gave a reasonable answer: «In times of change, we need to remind ourselves and others…basic truths: Our brains and our abilities are like muscles. They can be strengthened with practice…» What should we do that employees could do everything correctly and cope with the most difficult problems? What conditions are necessary for this?

Christensen C.M. (1997, p. 171) in his famous book, «The innovator's dilemma» writes

«If a manager determined that an employee was incapable of succeeding at a task, he or she would either find someone else to do the job or carefully train the employee to be able to succeed. Training often works, because individuals can become skilled at multiple tasks».

So, one of the initial steps to dealing with employees well is training them. However, there are cases when training is useless. Especially if the organization implements changes and project activities. In this connection, it is necessary to understand the concept of an organization's capabilities. An organization's capabilities depends largely on the people who work in it. According to Christensen (2012), capabilities are factors that determine what a company can and cannot do and three things can represent the organization's capabilities: resources, processes and priorities. «Together, these capabilities are crucial in order to assess what a company can and, perhaps more important, cannot accomplish» (Christensen, 2012, p. 124). If managers understand that an organization's capabilities are not suited for a new task, in these cases they have three options «through which to create new capabilities» (Christensen,

1997, p. 172). Here Christensen offers more than radical methods. According to him managers could do:

– Acquire a different organization whose processes and values are a close match with the new task.

– Try to change the processes and values of the current organization.

– Separate out an independent organization and develop within it the new processes and values that are required to solve the new problem (Christensen, 1997, p. 172).

According to Gardiner (2005), five fundamental systems in every organization constitute the underpinnings to develop effective teams. They are culture, structure, internal economy, methods and tools, metrics and rewards. In principle, Gardner and Christensen do not contradict each other. Many authors insist that efficiency of leadership primarily depends on culture and organizational culture (Williams, 2012; Dubrin, 2006; Clements & Gido, 2011, Muhtarova et al. 2014, Kubaev & Baysholanova 2013, Kappels 2008, Mazur et al. 2004).

Therefore, if executives are interested in changing the situation in organization they have to be aware of principles of leadership, project and change management instruments. For example in functional organizations and organizations of weak matrixes, the project manager does not have enough power to make team members do something. As a result, a project manager tries to influence team members without any direct authority. Therefore, a project manager has to use leadership and interpersonal skills like persuasion, negotiation, and communication. Project managers often have little formal authority. They «therefore get their authority through respect for their experience, good track records, persuasiveness and downright dogged determination – in short, by influence» (Field & Keller, 2011).

Project managers have the responsibility to satisfy the needs: task needs, team needs, and individual needs. As project management is a critical strategic discipline, the project manager becomes the link between the strategy and the team (ANSI, 2008). Projects are tools to grow and survive for organizations. Projects help 'to create value in the form of improved business processes» (ANSI, 2008, p.17). They are necessary in producing new products and services. Project management makes it easier for companies to respond to changes in the environment and to be more competitive. As a result, the project manager's role becomes increasingly strategic.

Yet, understanding and applying the knowledge, tools, and techniques on project management is not enough to do right things. In addition to any area-specific skills, soft skills are required (ANSI, 2008).

Knowledge refers to «hard skills» of project management. Performance refers to «what the project manager is able to do while applying his or her project management knowledge» (ANSI, 2008). Personal skills refers to «soft skills» or

«…how the project manager behaves when performing the project or related activity. Personal effectiveness encompasses attitudes, core personality characteristics, and leadership, which provides the ability to guide the project team while achieving project objectives and balancing the project constraints» (ANSI, 2008).

Project managers implement work through hard and soft skills. Managing project effectively require project managers to show «a balance of ethical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills that help them analyze situations and interact appropriately» (ANSI, 2008). Further, the important soft skills of project managers are team building, motivation, communication, influencing, decision-making, and political awareness. The soft skills are particularly important to project managers. Leading means influencing people to achieve any organizational objectives. Leading involves energizing, directing, persuading others, and creating a vision.

According to Dubrin (2006), leadership includes such important interpersonal processes as motivating, communicating, coaching, and showing group members how they can reach their goals. Leadership is a key component of managerial work because management accomplish through people. The leadership aspect of management focuses on inspiring people and bringing about change, whereas the other three functions (organizing, controlling, and planning) focus more on maintaining a stable system (Dubrin, 2006). In essence, the mentioned interpersonal processes are example of realization of soft skills. At the same time Dubrin talks about the environment (stable system) where soft skills should be realized,

In line with various other scholars (e.g. Sanghera, 2011, Clements & Gido 2011) state that managing projects effectively takes a multitude of skills. They suggest all skills of a project manager to divide into two parts: managerial skills and interpersonal ones. Managerial skills involve the next: accounting and financial management, attention to details, information technology, negotiation and conflict management, problem solving, sales and marketing. Interpersonal skills include communication,

influencing, leadership, networking, and perceptive navigation. In this case, managerial skills relate with hard skills, in turn interpersonal ones are associated with soft skills.

Skills to influence the behavior of others relates to power. Power of managers comes from authority. Power is delegated to the manager from the upper level of the organization. It takes place when the organization expects the realization of its strategies and projects. If the manager does not have formal authority, there are other forms of power that he or she can use (Field & Keller, 2011). They are legitimate power, based on charismatic traits, expertise power, based on knowledge, affiliative power that arises from being associated with powerful persons in the organization, and political awareness gaining from the support of colleagues and superiors.

Managers or project managers have to use those kinds of power that are most suited both to their subordinates and colleagues and to the situation; having that power and applying it appropriately allows managers to influence where they cannot command (Field & Keller 2011). It can be assumed that all these types of power are realized through soft skills.

Not only managers or project managers are interested in high performance. Marketers as Kotler Ph. and Armstrong G. (2016, p. 305) value using a team-based new product development approach. Under this approach, «company departments work closely together in cross-functional teams.» As a result overlapping the steps in the product development process takes place. Project managers usually use overlapping in project management aspects. Instead of considering the product by departments in turn, the company can create a team of people from various departments that deal with the project (event, change, and product) from start to finish.

There are many examples when such cross-functional teams are very effective. Why are they so effective? Is leadership the main reason? Johnson S. (2010) does not think so and in his book 'Where good ideas come from. The natural history of innovations' tries to give another argument, basing on the following example:

«When the first market towns emerged in Italy, they didn't magically create some higher-level group consciousness. They simply widened the pool of minds that could come up with and share good ideas. This is not the wisdom of the crowd, but the wisdom of someone in the crowd. It's not that the network itself is smart; it's that the individuals get smarter because they're connected to the network.»

Harvard Business School Professors Kim Clark and Steven Wheelwright say about heavyweight and lightweight teams. The heavyweight team refers to a group of people «who are pulled out of their functional organizations and placed in a team structure that allows them to interact over different issues at a different pace and with different organizational groups than they habitually could across the boundaries of functional organizations. Heavyweight teams are tools to create new processes, or new ways of working together. In contrast, lightweight or functional teams are tools to exploit existing processes. (2000 cited by Christensen & Raynor, 2003).

Yet some authors find out other reasons why companies fail when face changes. Kotter J.P. (2012) argues that the biggest mistake people make when trying to change organizations is not having established a sufficiently high sense of urgency in employees. This error according to Kotter (2012, p.4) can become «fatal, because transformations always fail to achieve their goals, when complacency levels are high.»

Kawasaki (2015) gives interesting idea concerning how to solve the problem of a shortage of great employees. He considers that recruiting decisions should not be based on «irrelevant considerations» like race, creed, colour, sexual orientation, religion, formal education and work experience. Instead, Kawasaki (2015, p. 174) makes a focus on the next three factors as: «ability to perform what the leader needs, confidence, and the candidate's commitment». In fact, Kawasaki puts soft skills in the first place. Moreover Kawasaki G. (2015) gives an advice to follow to two theories. The first theory is to find the candidate who lacks major weaknesses and the second one is to find the candidate who has major strengths. Kawasaki (2015) divides all skills into big organization skills and start-up skills. Big organization skills are sucking up to the boss, generating paper profits, beating charges of monopoly, evolving products, market research, squeezing the distribution channel. Startup skills are being the boss, generating cash flow, establishing a beachhead, creating products, shipping, establishing a distribution channel. Kawasaki (2015, p. 177) continues:

«startups take four to five years of long hours at low pay with incredible highs and depressing lows with the constant fear of running out of money. And this is if things go well.»

Like other authors (Clark & Wheelwright, 2000, as cited in Christensen & Raynor, 2003) Kawasaki (2015, p. 176) dedicates «meaningfulness of soft skills presented as startup skills».

The use of leadership skills is not enough to ensure that human resources can fulfill any assigned task. Managers should take into account other

factors, such as organization structure, culture, strategy, interest and dedication, and much more. Knapp, Sprint, Zeratsky, Kowitz (2016, p. 29-37) have suggested recruiting a team members according to roles and consider that a mix is good like in the movie «Ocean's Eleven». According to the mentioned authors the effective team includes the decider, finance expert, marketing expert, customer expert, tech/logistics expert, and design expert. Only in such kind of team the «collaborative atmosphere» (Knapp et al. 2016, p. 35) takes place.

Some authors believe that the effectiveness of performance depends not only on employees, but also on executives. Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen (2011, p. 5, 27) believe that «entrepreneurs are somehow different from other executives.» The authors in their research are focused on innovators, in particular, innovative entrepreneurs. According to Kurman (2013, p.17), «If you want innovation to take place, set it free, and if it comes back to you – well – it's not precisely yours, but at least you've succeeded in introducing genuine value to the rest of the world....» Indeed, the innovators can courage to innovate and innovators have to possess behavioral skills as questioning, observing, networking, and experimenting which lead to associational thinking and as a result to creating the innovative business idea. Dyer et al. (2011) are presenting the innovator's DNA model for generating innovative ideas. The model (Dyer et al., 2011, p. 27) distinguishes innovators as people who actively engage in discovery skills. As Lafley (2008) declared, «innovation is the central job of every leader – business unit managers, functional leaders, and the CEO» (2008, as cited in Dyer et al., 2011).

In accordance with Bessant and Tidd (2015, p.144), «creativity is also about motivation and communication.» Nevertheless, successful entrepreneurs are not just able to come up with creative idea; they can shape and adapt their ideas. «They have a strong sense of vision and can communicate and engage others in sharing that insight» (Bessant and Tidd, 2015, p.145).

Kerzner & Saladis (2013, p. 41) as professional project managers suggest focusing on the skills that help in «achieving the objectives of a project and ensuring customer satisfaction». All these require:

«a project team that is knowledgeable, has the necessary skill set, is fully committed to the project, and is managed by a project manager who possesses effective organization, communication, and leadership skills».

In fact, «some individuals are naturally talented in doing the right thing at the right time and in the right way to help their teams succeed»; in other respects other individuals «require training to develop their skills in taking action» (Hachman, 2002, p. 224). He suggests the different skills from other authors but they are so close to soft skills: envisioning, inventive, negotiation, decision-making, teaching, interpersonal, and implementation skills. At the same time, Hachman (2002) states that training should involve observation of «positive models» combined with practice and feedback. Stone and Heen (2015, p. 45) pay special attention to feedback because it «helps increase knowledge, skill, capability, growth».

Results and discussion

Results of the conducted study showed that only nearly 50% of respondents are informed about soft skills. At the same time, 58% of respondents strongly agree and 10 % of respondents agree that interpersonal skills are very important for their career opportunities. After short explanation concerning soft skills, 95% of respondents answered that soft skills are demanded at their workplace and they have to be evolved throughout life. In addition, majority of the respondents (73 %) accepted that the power's exercising depends on the personal characteristics of the leader or manager.

Soft skills are important and there are reasons for this, because they influence how the employees fit into the team, come out of different situations, work in a team and as a result, these skills affect the work's efficiency and results. Undoubtedly, soft skills and their level affect the whole organization. Of course, it is difficult to believe that such skills can greatly influence the organization; it is even more difficult to assess them.

Soft skills are the personal qualities, social attributes and communication skills necessary for success at work. Soft skills characterize how a person interacts with others. Unlike hard skills, soft skills are like emotions or insights that allow people to «read» others. They are much more difficult to learn, at least in the traditional classroom. They are also much harder to measure and evaluate. Soft skills include attitude, communication, creative thinking, work ethic, teamwork, networking, decision-making, positivity, time management, motivation, flexibility, problem solving, critical thinking and conflict resolution.

It is easy to understand why employers want job candidates with special challenging skills. However, soft skills are important for the success of almost all employees. After all, almost every job requires

employees to interact with others in some way. Therefore, the ability to interact well with others is important in any job.

Another reason employers are looking for candidates with soft skills is that soft skills are transferable ones that can be used regardless of the job. This makes job candidates with soft skills highly adaptable employees.

In addition, people with soft skills are often seen as having unique and broad knowledge that can diversify a company and help it work more efficiently.

Soft skills are especially important in working with clients. These employees are usually in direct contact with customers. In order to listen to the client and provide him/her with a useful and polite service, a number of soft skills are required.

Conclusion

An online survey was employed, which was distributed among Kazakhstani employees via Google Survey. A cross-sectional survey with an n=231 employees working in various organizations was conducted. The research proved the hypothesis that poor soft skills lead to poor performance of any activity where people interact.

One of the reasons why this research project was initiated is the attempt to systematize issues related to the importance of leadership qualities, in particular soft skills. The subject of the research is very popular among both academicians and business community. All authors, regardless of

the professional sphere, note that the modern world is rapidly changing. Therefore, to maintain competitiveness, organizations must meet the challenges of the external environment. However, conventional management is not enough. Leadership and power through soft skills are able to deal with new challenges. In addition, most authors note that two factors that can make possible to face changes effectively. First, it is fundamental systems; that is, organization must prepare the ground for all processes that would take place in the organization. Second, it is the level of comprehensive skills of the organization's leaders. In an ever-changing world, the development and cultivation of the company employees' important skills is an integral part of the organization's strategy. However, it is necessary to distinguish between hard and soft skills. Not neglecting to develop hard skills, but pay particular attention to soft skills, that are dependent on the goals of the organization or project.

In this article, we presented the most important soft skills people needs for a successful activity in companies. Based on the literature analyses we found out the major soft skills to develop for employees are communication, problem solving, teamwork, creativity, leadership, strategic thinking, customer service, innovation management. To continue research authors are planning to study methods that will be effective in mastering soft skills as: e-learning platform, face-to-face workshops, interactions with role-play, simulation, mentoring, and coaching.

References

ANSI (2008). Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge. PA, USA: Upper Darby

Ariratana, W., Sirisookslip, S., & Ngang, T. (2015). Development of Leadership Soft Skills Among Educational Administrators. Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 186, 331-336. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.016

Bessant, J., Tidd J. (Ed.). (2015). Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 3rd ed. UK: John Wiley & Sons

Blumberg, M. (2013). Startup CEO. A field guide to scaling up your business. Hoboken, USA: John Wiley & Sons

Christensen, C.M. (1997). The innovator's dilemma. When new technologies cause great firms to fail. Boston, USA: Harvard Business Review Press

Christensen, C.M., Allworth, J., Dillon, K. (2012), How will you measure your life? New York, USA: HarperCollins Publishers

Christensen, C.M., Raynor, M.E. (2003). The innovator's solution. Boston, USA: Harvard Business Review Press

Clements, J.P., Gido J. (2011). Effective Project Management. USA: Cengage Learning

Cotrell, S. (2005) The critical thinking skills. New York, USA: Palgrave MacMillan

Cotrell, S. (2008) The study skills handbook. New York, USA: Palgrave MacMillan.

Dubrin, A.J. (Ed.). (2006). Essentials of Management, the 7th ed. USA: Thomson.

Dyer, J., Gregersen H., Christensen C.M. (2011). The innovator's DNA. Boston, USA: Harvard Business Review Press

Field, M., Keller L. (2011). Project Management. USA: Cengage Learning

Gardiner, P.D. (2005). Project Management. A strategic planning approach. UK: Palgrave Macmillan

Gupta, S.L. (2004) Marketing Research. New Delhi, USA: Excel Books

Hachman, J.R. (2002). Leading teams: setting the stage for great performance. Boston, USA: Harvard Business Review Press

Heath, Ch., Heath D. (2010). Switch. How to change things when change is hard. New York: Broadway Books

Johnson, S. (2010). Where good ideas come from. The natural history of innovations. USA: Penguin Group

Kappels, T.M. (2008) Finansovo-orientirovannoe upravlenie proektami. Moskva, Rossiya: ZAO «Olimp-Biznes»

Kawasaki, G. (2015). The art of Start 2.0. UK: Portfolio/Penguin

Kerzner, H., Saladis F.P. (2013). Project Management Workbook and PMP/CAPM Exam Study Guide. NJ. USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken

Knapp, J. Sprint., Zeratsky J., Kowitz B. (2016). How to solve big problems and test new ideas in just five days. UK: Penguin Random House

Kotler, Ph., Armstrong G. (2016). Principles of marketing. Global edition. UK: Pearson Educated Limited

Kotter, J.P. (2012). Leading change. USA: Harvard Business Review Press

Kubaev, K.E., Baysholanova, K.S. (2013) Biznes-planirovanie innovatsionnyih proektov. Almatyi, Kazahstan: IP «Sagautdi-nova»

Kurman, M. (2013). Tech Transfer 2.0: How universities can unlock their patent portfolios and create more tech startups. New York, USA: Triple Helix Press, Ithaca

Malhotra, N. (2013) Basic Marketing Research: A Decision-Making Approach. – 4 ed. – USA: Pearson New International Edition

Mazur, I.I., Shapiro V.D., Olderogge N.G. (2004) Upravlenie proektami. Moskva, Rossiya: Omega-L

Muhtarova, K.S. i drugie (2014) Upravlenie proektami. Almatyi, Kazahstan: Kazak universiteti

Sanghera, P. (2009). 90 Days to Success as a Project Manager. USA: Cengage Learning

Stone, D., Heen Sh. (2015). Thanks for the feedback. The science and art of receiving feedback well. USA: Penguin books

Williams, Ch. (2012). Effective management. A multimedia approach. USA: South-Western Cengage Learning