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MANAGEMENT – THE DECISIVE FACTOR IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The approach of management as one of the most important factors of development and economic growth and, implicitly, the eficientization of the Romanian economy and organizations "departs" from a truth highlighted by Peter Drucker several decades ago: "there are no rich countries and poor countries, but only well-run and poorly led countries". In support of this statement, our work is also based on the economic, social and political realities of Romania, an emerging country in South-Eastern Europe, which has been a member of the European Union since 2007. In order to explain this hypostasis of management, the author has presented some aspects regarding its content (hoping that, at least, we, the specialists, will "speak" the same language!), as weel as some economic, social and political characteristics of the Romanian economy and society in the last 29 years. Also some dimensional peculiarities and functionalities of the microeconomic management have been highlighted. These aspects have allowed not only the causal detection of some dysfunctions and strengths, but, above all, outlining ways to amplify the role of management in the development and economic growth. I have also suggested some common actions to be undertaken jointly with specialists - teachers, managers, researchers s.o. from the Republic of Moldova for the benefit of macroeconomic and microeconomic efficiency and effectiveness in both countries.

Keywords: management, process approach, managerial reengineering, corporate policy responsibility, managers professionalisation

1. Introduction

There are several considerations regarding the content of management necessary to justify its fundamental role in economic development:

- tackled in a narrow sense, management is associated with leadership; tackled broadly, management = leadership + administration;
- In both situations, the necessary and mandatory condition of management is the existence of a manager and at least an executant; as such, you can not say that you are a "boss" unless you have at least one subordinate;
- Over the years, we have found that a significant part of those holding managerial positions - from ministers to business executives - is below the minimum level of managerial competence, i.e. it does not have sufficient management knowledge (the scientific side of managerial competence), qualities and skills (the artistic side of managerial competence);
- the English-Saxon Management Interpretation in the Romanian vocabulary was made without distinction, its excessive promotion deforming its real content (expressions such

- as information system management or decision-making management, waste management, project life cycle management are used so on). which, rather, have the meaning of administration;
- if in terms of scope, we have highlighted the narrow sense approach and extended approach, the content of management can be treated as management processes, management system, persons who practice management, i.e. managers;
- process approach: in any organization, three categories of work processes are exercised

 business processes, generating economic goods that give consistency to the activity object of the respective organisation, auxiliary processes or support processes, specialized services for the business processes, and management processes, specific to managers; the latter entails the exercising of distinct functions, i.e. forecast, organisation, coordination, training and control-evaluation, each materializing into foundation, adoption and application of managerial decisions;
- the managers are those who set objectives, ways of realization, the sizing of the necessary resources, specify the intermediate and final terms, ensure the procedural, organizational and human conditions necessary for achieving the objectives, harmonize the decisions and actions of the subordinated personnel and subdivisions through managerial communication, determines the participation of staff in the establishment and realization of the objectives through appropriate motivation, periodically and finally evaluates and controls the stage of achieving the objectives;
- if this is simultaneously a socio-economic, technico-material, open, organically adaptive, predominantly operational and a management system, the last characteristic refers to the existence of several managerial subsystems or components methodological, decisional, informational, organizational and human resources management in multiple relationships of interdependence;
- the approach from the managerial point of wiev (,,the management of the organisation X", ,,the management of Y department", ,,Z organisation's top management" and so on);
- the essence of management: the exercising of management processes through managerial decisions;
- those who practice management are the managers; their roles relate to substantiating and adopting management decisions and monitoring their implementation by executants; in their turn, executants initiate actions to operationalize management decisions; for this, a three-dimensional approach of managers is needed, through IQ, EQ and PQ, respectively rational managerial skills, empowering emotional management and political managerial skills, respectively acquiring and maintaining the power to exercise the first two. Their sum reveales the management coefficient (MQ), to which those who recruit and make the final selection of managers should report to [4, p. 6-13];
- Managers are responsible for the quality of their decisions and partly for the results of their application, while the executives are responsible for the efficiency of the decision operationalization process! It is very important to dissociate the responsibility of the two categories of actors specific to each organization, starting from the roles "played" by them, especially when evaluating the performance of managers; the lack of a simplistic approach of the managerial results and the often unfounded labeling the management as

- a "bad management" by some of them starts precisely from the misunderstanding of the meaning of the binomial roles- results;
- the decisions adopted by the managers must be of good quality, i.e. scientifically, opportune, empowered, integrated and comprehensible in the conditions of capitalizing quality information and the use of an appropriate managerial tool, evolved while the implementing of the decisions by the executants should be efficient and effective ensures that results are achieved at least at the level of the assumed objectives and under the foreseen conditions; as such, a distinction should be made between quality and efficiency in management, each of these two categories benefiting from specific indicators of appreciation;
- the fundamental condition of the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of managerial decisions is the managerial and professional competence of managers and executants, i.e. their professionalism;
- the exercise of a professional management ultimately materializes into obtaining managerial performance, which, in turn, generates economic performance;
- management is undoubtedly the main factor of economic development, economic growth and economic progress.

2. Romania, socio-economic and political coordinates

After the events of December 1989, which created the rupture of socialism and the entering into a new period of capitalist development, there were profound political, social and economic transformations, with both favorable and unfavorable consequences, on the society and the Romanian economy "state of health". The main coordinates are briefly listed below:

- Romania is a parliamentary republic; the Parliament has 2 decision-making chambers the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies and counts over 500 MEPs elected once every four years;
- the President is elected every five years by popular vote; after 1989, Romania had four presidents, two of them with double mandates;
- in 29 years, Romania had 16 governments and over 20 prime ministers (including interim officials) out of which only 2 completed their four-year mandate;
- the population of Romania is almost 20 million inhabitants, decreasing with about 3.5 million compared to 1989, mainly due to the migration to Western Europe and the dramatic decrease of the birth rate [6];
- in the World Economic Forum's ranking of the global economic competitiveness index, Romania ranks 68th out of 137 countries, down 6 places compared to 2016-2017 (19 places behind Bulgaria, 29 places behind Poland, but ahead of Croatia, Serbia, Greece and the Republic of Moldova); it is to be noticed that this ranking is based on 12 criteria (institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, efficiency of the goods market, labor market efficiency, financial market development, technological training, market size, innovation), grouped into 3 categories, each with specific indicators (114 in total); the ranks of Romania for the

period 2017-2018, corresponding to each criteria, were: institutions - 86; infrastructure - 83; macroeconomic environment - 38; health and primary education - 92; higher education and training - 70; efficiency of the goods market - 92; labor market efficiency - 89; the development of the financial market - 88; technological training - 51; market size - 41; business complexity - 116; innovation - 96 (the overall competitiveness index was 4.28 on a scale from 1 to 7) [5];

• furthermore, Romania became unique in the world when has paid its foreign debt in 1989 (March); yet, in 2018 its foreign debt is over 96 billion euros.

The managerial approach of the Romanian economy and society from 1990 to 2018 highlights the following aspects:

- legislative and political instability, generating economic and managerial instability, corruption phenomenon and bureaucracy, both at macro and microeconomic level, as well as at social level;
- Romania currently lacks a global national strategy, it only has a government program with a pronounced political dimension; instead of a global strategy, it has sectoral strategies, with questionable degree of substantiation; as long as one does not know what one wants, it is very hard, if not impossible, to build something durable!
- From the organizational point of view, the number of ministries and government agencies oscillates, from a relatively reasonable figure immediately after the parliamentary election, to a further higher figure, as the mandate of the electors is approaching the end; amplifying the bureaucracy is the most serious consequence!
- intra- and inter-ministerial communication, among the most important state institutions, as an important support for coordination, is extremely poor; the two and a half decades lack of decisional transparency making the society divided into 2 distinct camps, following the power-opposition model, with serious consequences on the country's progress! These confrontations, normal in any democracy, up to a point, raise many questions when transferred into the street, situations speculated by others outside the borders and used as arguments for sanctioning Romania. The big "construction of the state" problems are created by ourselves, inside the country and are the consequence of a totally deficient political management exercised at the level of the political parties, the Parliament, the Government so on. The parallel which is often referred to with what was happening 2500 years ago in the state-city of Athens, with a genuine democracy, is not at all haphazard!
- Incompetence reaches high rates, mainly due to the lack of adequate selection, recruitment, employment and promotion criteria for managers on the upper level of the organizational structure of the economy; as long as the priorities are of political and clientele nature, instead of being focused on managerial and professional competence, we will have ministers, state secretaries, general managers and directors with questionable competence or lack of knowledge, qualities, managerial and professional skills consistent with the specificity of the domains they function in! Their temptation to more and more consistent, but unjustified earnings, is only a step towards corruption!
- So, at the macroeconomic and social level, those who lead and manage are:

- elected by electoral ballot president of the country, parliamentarians;
- proposed by the winning party or coalition, validated by Parliament Prime Minister and Ministers;
- appointed by the Prime Minister State Secretaries and Directors of National Agencies / Authorities;
- appointed by competition the general directors and the directors of the ministries.

3. The Romanian Organization

A healty economy is conditioned by the existence of profitable businesses. An economy develops and thrives if the socio-economic entities are financially solid. Romania has an important public sector and a private sector, which includes large enterprises and SMEs, with a majority private capital or fully-owned by private sector. On a whole, the "health" state of the Romanian organizations is not able to fully satisfy, being seriously influenced by both internal and exogenous variables, specific to the national and international environment. An incursion in their typology and economic evolution in the period after 1989 is necessary, precisely to highlight the role of management in generating economic performance. The typology of Romanian organizations includes mainly: public organizations (public enterprises and institutions), private organizations (small, medium and large private enterprises), subsidiaries of multinational companies, mixed companies, cooperatives (consumer, craft and agricultural);

- the number of public enterprises (national companies, autonomous operators, and so on), under the central public authority, in which the state is the sole or majority shareholder is 287 and that of public enterprises under local public authority is 1381;
- Public corporations benefit from corporate governance since 2011 in two ways: corporate
 governance centered on shareholders and stakeholder-centered corporate governance;
 what we meet in Romania is a mixture of the two variants, with a slight inclination
 towards the first;
- the management of public enterprises is carried out in a unitary system (with the Board of Directors and directors) or in a dual system (with the Supervisory Board, the Directorate and the Directors);
- many corporate enterprises are exempted from the application of corporate governance legislation through GO or GD; they "benefit" from a management decided exclusively on political criteria, partially justified by corporate political responsibility (a concept recently introduced in the managerial theory and practice, focused on exerting political influence at the enterprise level, setting goals, ensuring company sustainability, lobbying so on);
- the management of central public enterprises was privatized starting with 2009, through the recruitment and selection of Romanian or foreign managers (natural persons); the "private- manager working for the state" variant did not give the expected results, despite the support of such a trend by specialists and politicians, for several reasons: the selection criteria were not coherent enough and did not emphasize the managerial competence addressed both in knowledge and managerial skills, the Board of Directors or the Supervisory Board was made up of persons appointed on political terms without a

minimum managerial and professional competence required by the company's specificity, management or mandate contracts were poorly designed and, implicitly, easily attackable in the "divorce" situation from the managed and administrated enterprise;

- both in public enterprises, as well as in public institutions, there can be cited notions like: "spoil system", the phrase "bad management" and the consequences of invoking it; "exemplary fulfilled tasks" and "fulfilled objectives set out in the job description" / the role of the objectives in the responsibility of the individual; the main cause of managerial selection contests in these categories of organizations is the insufficiency or lack of testing of management knowledge (do candidates know how to lead?) and the amplification of the role of "relevant managerial experience" in the field (also see companies with private management, in which the candidates for CEO position must be proffesionals in the field); Is it enough? The answer is NO, because the obtaining of favorable economic results is the consequence of the operation of some fundamental modifications (changes) in the management system of the respective companies and, implicitly, in their organizational culture!
- the manifestation of "Parkinson's laws", "Peter's principle", "Dunning-Kruger effect" or "Cippola's laws" is still active in the microeconomic organizing systems, especially in public institutions and public enterprises where the influence of politics is determining the nomination of top managers or boards of directors [1, pp. 114-117];
- The number of private enterprises (small, medium and large) is around 550,000, with an overwhelming (over 91%) share of microenterprises (1-9 employees); small enterprises occupy 8.19% of the total, the medium-sized ones register 1.49%, while the large enterprises only 0.29% (there are 1600 such enterprises). This is the sector with the most consistent contribution to GDP;
- Sustainable legislation in Romania (Law 109/1996, Consumption Cooperatives and Credit Cooperatives, Law 566/2004 of the Agricultural Cooperative and Law 1/2005 of co-operation, republished in May 2014) tries to regenerate cooperatives, considered for good reason the "capitalist oases" in the communist economy (until 1989) and now the "communist oases" in the capitalist economy;
- The managers of public enterprises should be the result of a laborious manager selection competition, provided by corporate governance legislation; the members of boards of directors or supervisory boards are politically appointed or selected according to a procedure specific to corporate governance legislation; those who manage public institutions are appointed on political criteria;
- Private business managers are either business owners (SMEs) or are appointed by their participatory management bodies (large private enterprises).

4. The problem degree of investigation at the moment; the purpose of the research

Our investigations regarding the state of health of the national economy management and Romanian organizations have revealed, as it results from Sections 2 and 3 of the paper, several aspects that we are trying to present in a succinct way:

- the management at the level of the society and at that of the national economy is poor, lacking professionalism, predominantly operational, with exaggerated political influences, incapable of capitalizing the opportunities offered by the EU membership;
- the main cause is the lack of a strategic projection of the national economy, with realistic objectives, diversified strategic options and also realistic ways of obtaining competitive advantage; Instead, we can brag about the destruction of the big enterprises, emblematic for the socialist period, because according to economic and political analysts they did not have the level of competitiveness demanded by the competitive market!
- those who lead and manage the national economy do not meet the characteristics requested for professional managers, their promotion being exclusively based on political criteria. Incompetence has become a national cultural value!
- at the same time, the macroeconomic management must ensure legislative and fiscal stability, adequate infrastructure conditions, attracting European structural funds, the development of fundamental sectors for the economy - health, education, research and development - innovation - and continuous fight against corruption, debureaucratisation and depoliticization of management;
- at the level of the Romanian organizations, in a variety of organizational formulas, the management exerted is differentiated from the quality and efficiency point of view: public enterprises are subject to corporate governance and "benefit" from visible political influences, despite the existence of a methodology of selecting executive and non-executive managers; public institutions are led by politically nominated managers; small and medium-sized businesses have as managers those persons who established and own them (the separation of property from management is less common in Romania). If public organizations have serious problems with the professionalism of those who lead and manage them, the other "business" issues come from the environment, national and international: high taxation, legislative instability, bureaucracy of the system, political instability, insufficient facilities offered to SMEs and so on; they generate low profitability, low efficiency of the human factor, low liquidity, high indebtedness, capitalization difficulties, very small number of long-term investments, difficulties in recovering debts and so on;
- Limited stability and consistency in the legislation on selection, hiering, evaluation, motivation and promotion of managers. Legislative and managerial instability at the macro level generates managerial instability at the level of public organizations;
- The exercise of management processes and of each function requires the substantiation, adoption and implementation of decisions taken by managers at different hierarchical positions as follows [3, pp. 24-26]:
- a. Exercising the prevision function: establishing the objectives, the modalities for achieving, the dimensioning of the resources, specifying the deadlines, highlighting the ways to obtain a competitive advantage / substantiating and elaborating global and partial strategies and policies; it is the most important function of the management as it ensures the coordinates of the organization and its components evolution over various horizons of time; without the objectives, the exercise of the other functions is a non-

sense because it lacks the reference term to which the adopted decisions are compared to; cascading the objectives is a must!

- b. Exercising the *organizational function*: creation and maintenance of process conditions, organizational and structural, human, informational, methodological and managerial conditions, decision-making required by the achievement of the objectives / process organization, structural organization, decisional and informational organization and so on; the organizational documents that capture these steps are: the process map, the ROF, the organizational chart, the job descriptions, the decision-information sheets;
- c. Exercising the *coordination function*: Harmonizing staff decisions and actions as a prerequisite for achieving the objectives / managerial communication is decisive;
- d. Exercising the *training function*: determining the participation of the personnel in setting and achieving the objectives, taking into account the motivating factors / *motivation* is the economic support of the entrainment; the *motivational grid* that responds to the differentiation of motivation is the most important result of entrainment decisions;
- e. Exercise of the *control-evaluation function*: the periodic and final control and evaluation of the objectives achievement, the identification of the causes generating positive and negative deviations and the adoption of corrective decisions or the updating / recording of managerial and economic performances and counter-performances.
- substantiating and elaborating the strategy at the organization level depend on the existence of a global strategy and partial (sectoral) strategies at the level of the economy and its sectors, the task of the Government's managers; the national strategy and sectoral strategies represent one of the fundamentals of the global strategy of any organization, along with the diagnostic study, market study and environmental study.
- Ensuring the managerial conditions necessary for the quantitative and qualitative achievement of the objectives assumed by strategies and policies requires the managerial design / redesign of the organization, according to rigorous models / methodologies that take into account the interconditions between the components of the management system and the degree and timing of each component (of each subsystem) in its reconsideration and redesign: processes structures people (managers and executants) results.
- The efficient and effective operation of the redesigned management is conditioned by the adequacy of the organizational culture to its requirements and exigencies. The remodeling of organizational culture is mandatory in the context of managerial change through reengineering.

In all situations, we need professional managers who know what to do and how to do it and this is proven by the managerial decisions that one substantiates and adopts!

If the personnel policy is deficient in the sense that it does not provide "proper equipping of the positions" with competent employees, we try to improve it by reducing, to a reasonable extent, the impact of incompetence upon the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of management.

If we do not know management, we learn (continuous managerial training) or pay other people to do what we should do and teach us how to do it (managerial consultancy).

In both situations, emphasis should be placed on managerial methodology, which answers the question HOW DO WE LEAD? and ensures the professionalisation of management through:

promoting and using modern, evolved management tools as well as the promotion and use of rigorous management methodologies. Here are the reasons why our research needs to find those viable solutions for managerial efficiency of the economy and component organizations. The emphasis will be on the organization, because at its level an economic substance is produced or economic goods are created, in order to satisfy the social need.

5. Applied methods and materials

In conducting the research, I capitalized the didactic experience, my own scientific and managerial research, the study of the Romanian and foreign specialized literature regarding management, managers and efficiency. I have also redeemed the ideas launched over the last 30 years in over 80 scientific papers - books and specialized articles - written in this field. To those, I added statistical data and information, extracted from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook for 2017, international rankings on the competitiveness of national economies and so on.

6. Results

Numerous ways of professionalising and managerial efficiency of Romanian organizations, whether integrated or not in coherent models, are known and tested. The most significant of these, through which management demonstrates its role as the main factor in economic growth and development, are: generalized promotion of strategic management (in the context of a national global strategy, not just a governance program); managerial re-engineering; managerial methodologisation; managers professionalisation; improvement of organizational and managerial culture, depoliticization and de-bureaucracy of management; increasing decision-making transparency at organization level and so on.

Generalized promotion of strategic management - implies the aquisition of a predominantly prospective character of management through substantiating, developing, implementing and evaluating realistic global and partial strategies, with objectives, options, resources, deadlines and ways of obtaining a competitive advantage consistent with the organization life cycle phase, complexity and intensity of influences exerted by environmental, national and international factors; a professional manager uses strategy as a prediction tool and a mean to promote order, discipline and rigor in the organization. The strategy elaboration implies outlining ways to achieve strategic objectives, and its aplication or implementation requires "applying" that type of solutions through the appropriate decisions. In this perimeter, we can invoke some complementary ways, such as managerial redesigning - which also involves managerial methodologisation - or only managerial methodologisation, focused on the use of evolved management methods and techniques and specific managerial methodologies, the latter being the more effective way to a professional management, practiced by managers who "know" management. [1, pp. 207-225].

The *managerial reengineering* - a complex and difficult strategic approach, involves a redesign and a radical redesign of the organization management system and has, as a starting point, the results recorded in a previous period, causally diagnosed with the help of diagnosis and objectives

established by the strategic projection. The much simplified version of reengineering, as is usually known, of reengineering and redesigning business processes, can be invoked, but if we refer to the methodological scenario of strategic management, it is obvious that the overall redesign of management must be a priority concern. Our recommendation refers to a sequential methodological approach, which includes, in order, several steps: processes, structures, people, results [1, pp. 160-170].

Managerial Methodologisation - Another major way of managerial efficiency, focuses primarily on the promotion and use of modern, evolved management tools such as profit center management, management through objectives, project management, dashboard, diagnosis and rigorous methodologies for design, operation and maintenance of the management system and its subsystems functionality. If the diagnosis should occupy at least half of a manager's time budget (P. Drucker), the management through objectives and, in particular, its evolved version - profit-centre based management - should not be missing out on anything organization (public institution and company) [1, pp. 137-151].

7. Conclusions

These modalities - and others we have not referred to, such as improving organizational culture - provide the necessary conditions for the pursuit of a truly professional, efficient management with a strong innovative, predominantly predictive, reinvented character; its main features are:

- Engagement + Promotion on Competency Criteria;
- Loyalty through financial and non-financial motivation, bonuses, mentoring;
- Participation + increasing the decisional autonomy through managerial and economic decentralization / business formats;
- Accountability through cascading the objectives;
- Decisional transparency;
- Promoting competition within the company;
- Know-how managerial through benchmarking;
- Process and structural flexibility;
- Customers and other stakeholders satisfaction.

At the same time, we can not overlook the numerous joined actions with the socio-economic entities from the Republic of Moldova, which we want to see growing as quickly and intensely as possible: setting up clusters, work-shops with multidisciplinary participation, using benchmarking for the transfer of best practices in both ways, experience exchange and so on. A genuine transfer of managerial know-how is indispensable between organizations in our countries, as a possible source of competitive advantage, managers professionalisation and, implicitly, management! (also see the need for the transfer of management know-how for private managers, selected for national company management).

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Rezumat

Abordarea managementului ca unul din cei mai importanți factori de dezvoltare și creștere economică și, implicit, de eficientizare a economiei și a organizațiilor românești "pleacă" de la un adevăr evidențiat de Peter Drucker în urmă cu mai multe decenii: "nu există țări bogate și țări sărace, ci numai țări bine conduse și țări prost conduse". În favoarea acestei afirmații pledează și lucrarea noastră, elaborată pe baza realităților economice, sociale și politice din România, țară emergentă din sud-estul Europei, membru al Uniunii Europene din 2007. Pentru a explica o asemenea ipostază a managementului, am procedat la prezentarea unor considerente referitoare la conținutul acestuia (în speranța că vom reuși, măcar la nivel de specialiști, să vorbim aceeași limbă!), a unor caracteristici economice, sociale și politice ale economiei și societății românești din ultimii 29 de ani, precum și a unor particularități dimensionale și funcționale ale managementului microeconomic. Aceste aspecte au permis nu doar depistarea cauzală a unor disfuncționalități și puncte forte ci, mai ales, conturarea unor modalități de amplificare a rolului managementului în dezvoltarea și creșterea economică. De asemenea, am sugerat unele acțiuni comune cu specialiștii — profesori, manageri, cercetători etc. — din Republica Moldova în beneficiul eficienței și eficacității macro și microeconomice din ambele țări.

Cuvinte-cheie: management, abordarea pe procese, reengineering managerial, responsabilitate politică corporativă, profesionalizarea managerilor

Аннотация

Рассматривание менеджмента в качестве одного из важнейших факторов развития и экономического роста и, косвенно, мерилом эффективности румынской экономики и организаций идет от истины, о которой говорил Питер Друкер несколько десятилетий назад: «нет богатых и бедных стран, есть только хорошо управляемые и плохо управляемые государства». В контексте данного высказывания написана наша работа, основанная на экономических, социальных и политических реалиях Румынии, развивающейся страны, находящаяся на юго-востоке Европы, члена Европейского Союза с 2007 года. Для объяснения соответствующей ипостаси менеджмента представлены некоторые трактовки его содержания (в надежде, что, по крайней мере, язык будет тождественен на уровне специалистов!), даны экономические, социальные и политические характеристики румынской экономики и общества за последние 29 лет, а также некоторые пространственные и функциональные особенности микроэкономического менеджмента или управления. Эти аспекты позволили выявить не только некоторые причинные дисфункции и сильные стороны, но, прежде всего, сделать набросок определенных способов усиления роли менеджмента в экономическом развитии и росте. Также в работе предложены некоторые совместные действия для специалистов - учителей, менеджеров, исследователей и др. - из Республики Молдова, в интересах роста макро и микроэкономической эффективности обеих стран.

Ключевые слова: менеджмент (управление), технологический подход, управленческий реинжиниринг, корпоративно-политическая ответственность, профессионализация менеджеров