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BUSINESS ETIQUETTE, CORPORATE CULTURE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE TRAINING SYLLABUS FOR FUTURE MANAGERS

ETIQUETA DE NEGOCIOS, CULTURA EMPRESARIAL Y RESPONSABILIDAD SOCIAL EN LOS PROGRAMAS PARA FORMACIÓN DE FUTUROS GERENTES

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Abstract

Organizations' image and success depend to a large extent on how they are managed and on the training background of prospective managers. Nowadays, business etiquette, corporate culture and social responsibility are ranked among the most significant assets of an organization. Therefore the future managers' training syllabi have to cover managerial skills and ethics, corporate culture, managerial etiquette, social responsibility, as well as appropriate directions to and motivation of human resources. **The main objective** of this article is to focus the attention on the skills and competences that are significant for a modern manager, and on the opportunities to develop them at an early stage of prospective managers' training. **The main research methods** used in the article are content-analysis, comparison method, and intuitive and systematical approach.

Keywords

Management - Leadership - Managerial etiquette - Social Responsibility

Resumen

La imagen y el éxito de las organizaciones depende en gran medida de cómo se hayan administrado y de la capacitación de los futuros gerentes. La etiqueta de negocios, la cultura empresarial y la responsabilidad social se convierten en unos de los activos más importantes de las organizaciones en la condición contemporánea. Esto impone que en los programas formativos para los futuros gerentes se incorporen las habilidades gerenciales: la ética, la cultura empresarial, la etiqueta gerencial, la responsabilidad social, pero también la orientación correcta y la motivación de los recursos humanos. El propósito principal de este artículo es prestar atención a las habilidades y las competencias en la gerencia contemporánea y la posibilidad de desarrollarlas durante la capacitación de los futuros gerentes. Los principales métodos de investigación utilizados en el presente artículo son: el análisis de contenidos, el método de comparación, intuitivo y el enfoque de sistemas.

Palabras Claves

Management – Liderato – Etiqueta gerencial – Responsabilidad Social

Introduction

The successful management of nowadays is the adaptive one implemented as an adapting process, meeting the changes in business environment and ensuring good adaptability and efficiency of the organization. This is particularly important nowadays, with the constantly changing outer environment. An organization's competitiveness and the success of its leaders are more and more frequently associated with their ability to cope in the conditions of dynamics and their skills to develop competences for responding adequately to external environment. Globalization processes and incessant development of society of knowledge accentuate on education and training as significant economic. social and political priorities. The challenge encountered by societies at the beginning of the 21st century is to reach and keep an optimum employment within a sustainable economic growth. The requirement for constant improvement of the level of knowledge. skills and competences is a motivating factor and a prerequisite for personal development of all the people, ensuring their successful role on the labour market and active participation in all the occurring social processes of significance². Therefore some authors reckon that in modern society life-long learning can be determined as a critical factor of personal development and guarantee for a successful career, as formal education makes only a part of what an individual leans in one's lifetime³. Investments in human resources extend the organizations' options⁴. Development of high-quality human resources, i.e. the availability of larger and more capable and skillful human potential, is what makes an economy more productive, innovative and competitive.⁵

Contemporary training syllabi for future managers should be very adaptive and designed to meet the requirements of labour market that are becoming higher and higher. A special focus is to be put on building (finding and retaining) leader's skills and competences, systematical thinking, adequate and professional response to crisis situations, fundamental knowledge and skills for applying the managerial etiquette, knowledge and skills for building, keeping and developing corporate culture within the organization and appreciating and implementing social responsibility within business and social environment. In the course of training it is necessary to learn the principles of leadership, leader's styles, approaches and techniques. Leadership is a behaviour and activity that takes into account people's system of values, their interests, while motivating them to perform the tasks assigned and developing their creativity and potential to the benefit of the organization.⁶ In the course of future managers' training an attention is to be paid to teaching the ethical and mental issues of leadership and abilities for successful crisis management are to be developed. "There certainly exist crises provoked by poor management, but many of them result from factors or events that are beyond managers'

¹ M. Danchova, Issues of modern leadership. New realities in management, Science and Economics, Economic University. Varna, 2017, 78.

² E. Rizova y R. Dimitrova, State and trends of development of continuing vocational training. Economics and management, Volume: XIII, Issue: 2 (2017): 165-166.

³ E. Rizova y R. Dimitrova, Social partnership in the field of continuous vocational training. Management and sustainable development, Vol. 64, 3 (2017): 12.

⁴ R. Dimitrova y R. Vladov, Continuing vocational training of employees of IT-sector in Bulgaria. Economics and management, Volume: XIII, Issue: 2, (2017): 187.

⁵ E. Rizova y R. Dimitrova. State and trends of development of continuing vocational training. Economics and managemen, Volume: XIII, Issue: 2, (2017): 166.

⁶ M. Danchova, Issues of modern leadership... 76.

control⁷." To that regard it is to be noted that "the main task of crisis management is to develop and implement the managerial decisions associated with the smallest risk, which are to contribute to the achievement of the goal set and to an outcome reached with a minimum use of extra resources and bringing to minimum adverse consequences." This necessitates futures managers to be trained and prepared with regard to the types of crises and the phases they have, the strategies of crisis management, the methods for forecasting their occurrence, and the formation of a crisis management team. The incorporation of managerial etiquette, corporate culture and social responsibility in the prospective managers' training syllabi is particularly important.

Discussion

For the purposes of this study it would be appropriate to review separately managerial etiquette, corporate culture and social responsibility. The creation and establishment of the rules of the social and business etiquette took centuries, the building of corporate culture - decades. Future managers in the situation of globalization and falling world borders, shall inevitably be involved in relations with international partners. Therefore, since the time of their training they should be improving their communication skills. Hence, business etiquette as a practical skill is an economic must. Regarding the individual – in order to take and keep the required job, in order to secure career development, in order to improve one's efficient professional performance and in order to feel satisfied with one's job. Regarding the company – in order to enhance the level of its corporate culture, in order to be competitive and to have good reputation before its partners and customers to be competitive and to have good reputation before its partners and customers of behaviour in work environment, which ensures the establishment and maintenance of an efficient, active and up-to-date corporate culture.

Building a positive image by the enterprises is a prerequisite for the improvement of their competitiveness¹¹. The image of a company is created not only through the type and quality of the products and services it offers. The kind and amiable behaviour of employees and management staff may have a huge significance both for the customers and for the harmony at work and the emotional atmosphere inside the company. It is the managerial business etiquette that supports the successful and ethical business communication within the company. It provides employees and managers with the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills in implementing the ethical standards in making high-quality professional decisions. The knowledge of managerial business etiquette provides managers with clear benchmarks in choosing an acceptable behaviour when business experiences problems.

⁷ M. Stankova, "Management And Control In Crisis In The Development Of Tourism," Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Economics, South-West University "Neofit Rilskl", Blagoevgrad, vol. 3(1) (2015): 69-79.

⁸ M. Filipova, Management of enterprises in crisis situations (Blagoevgrad: University Publishing House, 2009), 124.

⁹ B. Pachter and M. Brody, Business etiquette (Sofia: 1999).

¹⁰ M. Usheva, Managerial business etiquette (Blagoevgrad: University Publishing House. "N. Rilski", 2010), 5.

¹¹ D. Kyurova y D. Yaneva, Research on the impact of the corporate image on the competitiveness of interior design enterprises, CBU International Conference on Innovations in Science and Education, Prague, Czech Republic, vol. 5 (2017): 495. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.12955/cbup.v5.973, www.cbuni.cz, www.journals.cz

For the purposes of this study the attention shall be focused on the reasons, for which it is necessary to study business etiquette. First, the skills in such area can directly and indirectly increase the profit of a company. Direct increase of profit comes with the establishment of good relations between employees and customers turning customers into loyal patrons owing to the fact that they feel respected and appreciated. And indirectly – the implementation of business etiquette at work improves corporate culture, employees' morality and quality of work, while decreasing staff fluidity and increasing work capacity. "Corporate culture covers all the recognized rules, values, established traditions, habits and aspirations formed at setting-up and establishing an enterprise, which are accepted and implemented by its members. All its positive qualities form the business etiquette of the enterprise and of its employees who follow it and prove that every day by their loyal work and contacts with partners, customers and colleagues. Being an active, based on particular rules system in contemporary business, corporate culture ensures succession, professional interaction, security and development of the company and its personnel."12 Second, it is good for young employees to be taught to demonstrate appropriate behaviour and knowledge in the field of good manners and adequate conduct in business environment since student bench as prospective managers. And third, managerial staff and all the employees contribute to the company's image even in their leisure. Their behaviour speaks of the manner of making business and the relationships within the company and with the customers and partners.

It should be noted that business etiquette provides opportunities for the development of optimum and durable relationships with the partners. The lack of such skills may have serious consequences on business, because, though it is not directly fixed, partners are assessed first by their behaviour and communication skills. This is particularly valid in international business where the lack of knowledge of business etiquette may disqualify the company at the very beginning and put it in the ranks of the companies with local significance only. And again, it is the business etiquette that underlies modern, time-adequate and efficient corporate culture.

As psychologists say, rules of business etiquette make a part of the system of social norms and social management, and they perform many functions: regulation (behaviour and joint actions of the members of the social group, which makes possible the activity itself, securing stability and order); improvement (efficiency of business interaction, optimizing it and performing business functions); communication (as means for showing respect and goodwill, helping to create and maintain good business relations, to prevent conflicts); discipline (reflecting status differences to enhance the hierarchy in relations); integration (providing unity and homogeneity of the social group on the account of the unity of norms and social expectations of its members); self-presentation (with regard to the individual – a prerequisite for cooperation (involvement in, acceptance by) the group); orientation (in business environment, team, situation, decreases uncertainty thus performing psychological support functions). It should be noted that the whole system of rules of business etiquette, according to a large part of the specialists, is based on the fundamental universal principles, in which it is good to teach future managers from the beginning of their professional path, like, for example, the principle of respect, principle of superior's priority, principle of aesthetics, etc.

Based on the representations hereinabove it may be summarized that prospective managers should be taught that business etiquette and the adequate corporate culture are

PH. D. MARIANA USHEVA / PH. D. MILENA FILIPOVA

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¹² M. Filipova, Corporate culture (Blagoevgrad: University Publishing House, 2010), 13.

important parts of business communication, providing at a behavioural level coordination of the interests of all the participants in communication. Business etiquette provides future managers with practically applicable knowledge and skills in many areas, but for the purpose of this research we shall study only a few of them: the use of business correspondence, business talks and team building. Those do not form the comprehensive contents of the future managers' training syllabus, but can be taken as an initial basis of practical training.

The use of business correspondence is a skill that is exceptionally important for prospective managers, as from the very beginning of their employment after the end of their training they are expected to make contacts. The business letter is a bilateral communication¹³, with the help of which an organization's business relations within the organization itself and with its external partners are established and maintained. A significant part of business activities is established through verbal communication or over the phone, but the arrangements reached are to be confirmed in writing. Correspondence is a document that may strengthen the links already established and vary them, as in letters one may use various types, styles and manners of writing.

The business letter is among the most popular means of information exchange and operational management of various processes in the business of organizations and institutions¹⁴. The formal letter is among the most significant communication channels of companies, organizations and institutions with the world outside. Using written communication, initial business contacts are made, preliminary negotiations are conducted, relations between enterprises and companies are clarified, and claims are raised. Business letters accompany the transit of tangible valuables and others. Notwithstanding the availability of modern forms of communication, the volume of correspondence, even in small business organizations, is very big. Therefore, prospective managers have to be trained in proper handling, preparing, storing, etc., their business correspondence.

Nowadays, there are many countries in which the process of unification of business letters is under active organization. Unification concerns all the levels and aspects of language: its vocabulary, morphology, syntax, graphics, punctuation and style. Business letters reflect not only individual but most often group interests – the interests of state institutions, companies, corporations, etc., and in most of the countries business correspondence is kept in the name and on behalf of the collective body.

It is essential for the future managers to be taught that modern business correspondence¹⁵ is characterized most of all by its efficient style. Style is an aggregate of external form and internal contents combined in a way to fully contribute to the goals set by the author. The efficient style of a letter strengthens the recipient's trust. An *efficient style of writing* always *takes into consideration the partner's individuality;* uses *appropriate tone*; *is clear* (uses sentences of an optimum length; uses words and expressions that are close to the reader; uses well-structured paragraphs; the text is grammatically correct); *is interesting,* etc.

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¹³ B. Andonov, Business communication – rules and means of business communication (Sofia: 1999).

¹⁴ N. F. Dolgopolova y Y. V. Sukhacheva, Business correspondence: Methodological directions (Orenburg: GOU OGU, 2002).

¹⁵ B. Pachter. and M. Brody. Business communications...

Business communication is closely bound to verbal skills, rhetoric techniques and approaches, to using abilities for convincing the business partner, to various logic and emotional means of influence and influencing to a particular opinion. Modern management uses more and more frequently electronic and automated systems of information and management. But this trend is not opposed to another trend: the personal influence through verbal communication and speech richness is gaining greater and greater importance. Therefore, it is very important for future managers to acquire knowledge of and training in the respective skills and practical bases. Due to the recognition of human values and ethics of relationship there is currently a trend of business communication humanizing. Such humanizing is supported also by the great effect of personal conversations, discussions, disputes between individual representatives of business world.

Eloquence is not just another beneficial quality of a manager; it is a serious prerequisite for his/her successful career, and an essential indicator of the level of his/her corporate culture. The mastership of oratory to which future managers are to be trained, inevitably results from the common principle of rhetoric art. And they were formulated in ancient times by Aristotle¹⁶: *clarity of public interest; clarity of thought; clarity of speech.* Prospective managers should be taught that words are their major resource, tool and means of influence and interaction. Therefore, a manager could not allow him/herself be a poor orator or a person who is not skillful in the use of words. In particular in his/her role of a governing person, a future manager shall often have to conduct meetings, hold conferences, sessions, round tables; he/she shall be approached by journalists for interviews and comments; he/she is expected to take part in or organize press conferences, etc.

The subject of this work makes it necessary to focus the attention on the classical bases of rhetoric¹⁷, valid also for business communication, in which future managers should obligatorily be taught. These are proper speech structuring; making contact with listeners (customers, business partners, journalists, etc.); appropriate choice and excellent knowledge of word meanings; emotionality, clarity, brevity and simplicity of speech; tolerance and non-preachiness. Prospective managers should also clearly recognize and accept that trust is of a particular significance in business relations. Trust, being a major value category in organizational relationships, is very clearly demonstrated through rhetorical skills, through the skillful organization of words and adequate presentation.

Business talk is of course deemed to underlie business communication. It consists of the following four compulsory stages: exposition and acquaintance with the problem set for solution; clarification regarding the factors influencing solution; choosing a solution; actual decision making, acquaintance of participants with business communications. The most important prerequisite for the success of a business talk is the demonstration of qualities like competence, tactfulness and benevolence by the part of all the participants.

There are particular rules that should be kept by the manager in conducting a talk in a business or informal situation. The most important among them are: the need for conducting the talk in a way enabling every participant to take part and present his/her opinion. Attacks and insults regarding others' opinions are intolerable. At presenting one's opinion it is inappropriate to raise one's voice – the calmness and firmness of expression are far more convincing. During a talk one should attempt at clarity, accuracy and

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¹⁶ Y. Vedar, Introduction to Rhetoric (Sofia: 1979).

¹⁷ P. Ebeling, Rhetoric – the path to success (Sofia: Planeta, 1994).

simplicity of the arguments and considerations stated. It is intolerable to vilify or speak evil of people in their absence. It is also undesirable to discuss issues of which the person is not sufficiently competent. Simultaneous talking is not permitted. Politeness dictates that the superior or older persons should be allowed to speak first.

Young managers should be aware that good interlocutors are good not only at listening to others¹⁸. They know how to stimulate their partner in communication to talk more and more of oneself, of one's ideas, of interesting examples of one's experience in commerce or industry. This is done with a simile, with incessant and almost unnoticeable non-verbal behavior: affirmative nods, asking clarifying questions. The main goal of a benevolent behaviour during a talk is to learn as much as possible, to collect facts, names, cases that would be useful in future business. On the other hand – it is considered that such a gentlemanlike conduct obliges the partner to respond similarly. The culture of speech of a modern managerial type is not quick or easy to develop. Therefore, the earlier a manager starts such training, the better. Observing others in the process of talking, self-observing and timely correction of gaps and defects of language and style of communication, looking for the most appropriate phrase, respecting the dignity and independence of the partners, and many other actions contribute to polishing the skill for holding a complete business talk.

Respect is the most important prerequisite for building a strong team and creating a pleasant work climate¹⁹. For a team to be good, each member of its, and most of all its managers, should remember that every person needs respect, a bit of attention at least, and last but not least – time for oneself. Respect for colleagues may be demonstrated in various forms and it is not difficult at all. Polite and open approach to people, with a friendly tone and in a language that is understandable and recognizable for everyone. Providing the colleagues or inferiors with the opportunity to express their opinion even when it does not match that of the manager. In business etiquette the demonstration of kindness is compulsory, as is listening to each other. The colleagues/inferiors should not be interrupted in the course of a talk under any circumstances; it is intolerable to address them rudely or sarcastically.

According to the rules of business etiquette a manager cannot allow him/herself criticizing an employee in others' hearing, or discussing an employee's mistake in the presence of others or in the absence of the employee concerned. The problem is to be discussed personally and in private with the person blamed, as he/she is a human being, and in such a moment of weakness he/she needs respect even more badly. Prospective managers should learn that the praise for a good job, even the most insignificant one, is a sure way to motivate employees in being even more diligent. A good manager encourages efforts to improvement and aspirations for development. He/she attempts at seeing the positive qualities of each of his/her colleagues.

As already noted, organizations' image depends to a large extent on the way they are managed. Hence, it depends on the preparation and background of future managers. Based on the representations hereinabove, we consider that building a professional ethics and social responsibility is among the most important factors in future managers' professional training. This determines their particular significance in the situation of nowadays.

¹⁹ M. Uhseva, Positive leadership (Blagoevgrad: University Publishing House "N. Rilski", 2010).

¹⁸ M. Usheva, The Magic of Communication. PC "Intellect-A" (Blagoevgrad: 1995).

Social responsibility is a concept reflecting the quality of relations between an organization (through its managers) and society. The three key figures in market economy are the economic subjects (producers); the consumers and the state. "With the development of the corporate structure of economy the responsibility of managers is gradually extended to the social area, too. Their involvement affects not only the shareholders, but also a broad circle of stakeholders/customers, suppliers and general public".²⁰

A clear example of social responsibility can be found in charity practices in Bulgarian society from the end of the 19th c. and the first half of the 20th c. Even then Bulgarian ethnopsychology focused on the development of young people, and in this case support was provided through donations to talented poor children and youths. However, we have to agree with P. Parvanov that it is "the social aspect that comes to the foreground, not the personal one "21. It is an interesting fact, it was not only the rich industrialists and owners who demonstrated social responsibility as we call it nowadays, but "more of the donations were made by small landowners giving smaller sums that were hard to collect "22". Within this sense we shall again agree with the said author that at the time it was done to satisfy an emotional need. Something, which, in our opinion, we must strive to evoke (or rather educate) in future managers. That is building and/or enhancing the emotional need and socially responsible conduct of modern managers to share their success and to compensate society, though with a small part for the opportunities they were provided with. In fact, it could be said that we are trying to return to that time when "more popular and larger in amounts were the donations and gestures made by rich people who felt need and duty to society from which they originated "23. In other words modern society is returning to the social function of business with a marked "social element in specifying the addressee"24. It is also interesting that nowadays, just like in par,t various forms of the social element can be traced down - "from completely educational, to primarily social provision of food, clothing, footwear, books and accessories and others for the period of studies of children²⁵.

A very important role for the recognition of the conception of corporate social responsibility is played by the research of Berle and Means in "The Modern corporation and private property". The famous English economists defend the thesis that from a private-owned institute the corporation is turning into a private-entrepreneurial institute and is gaining positions as a social force, which cannot be exempted from social responsibilities. Berle states that the growing force of labour is inevitably brining newer and newer requirements to public health, education and social support for workers. In the post-war period the conception of socially involved business was further developed. According to the American economist H. Bowen business should be socially adequate and

²⁰ E. T. Layton, The Revolt of the engineers, Social responsibility and American engineering profession, 1971, 6 y H. E. Kross, Executive opinion: What business leaders said and thought on economic issues, 1920-1960 (New York: 1970), 47.

²¹ P. Parvanov, Donation practices and motives of donators to education in Bulgaria (from the Liberation to the middle of the 20th c.) – B. Gift and cultures of charity for education: theories, institutions, individuals, 294.

²² P. Parvanov, Donation practices and motives of donators to education in Bulgaria... 300.

²³ P. Parvanov, Donation practices and motives of donators to education in Bulgaria...

²⁴ P. Parvanov, Donation practices and motives of donators to education in Bulgaria...

²⁵ P. Parvanov, Donation practices and motives of donators to education in Bulgaria...

²⁶ A. A. Berle y G. Means, The Modern corporation and private property (New York: 1934), 356.

²⁷ A. A. Berle, The American Economic Republic (New York: 1963), 180.

businessmen are obliged to take decisions that are "to comply with the values of society". A new step to strengthening the theoretical conception of corporate social responsibility was taken by the formulations of the American professor R. Davis. According to them social responsibility is not only a law-compliant behaviour, but also a new higher degree of recognition of social obligations by the part of the company "beyond the scope of the law, next to the statutory established obligations."

Later on professor Sethi studied corporations' behaviour in three aspects: social obligation, social responsibility and social sympathy, with which a step was taken to the future "codification of a law of social expectations" 30. The conception of social responsibility of corporations is disputable and has brought to broad discussions in the economic circles that have continued to nowadays. According to one of its keenest opponents – the founder of Monetarism – prof. M. Friedman from the Chicago school, business should have one and only social responsibility – "to use its resources and conduct its business activities aiming only at increasing profits while observing the rules of the game in the process of open and free competition, without any lies and swindles" 31.

In newer times discussions of social responsibility are hold on whether it is an object of studies of management, resp. corporate and strategic management, or whether it is a variety of marketing, resp. public relations. According to the English economist J. Smith incompany spending on health, education and improvement of quality of life should be incorporated into the company's business-strategy³². He states as example the positive experience of the large American corporations who have many years of traditions to that regard.

The components of social responsibility are those comprising elements of its, which reveal its essence:

- **social obligation** that means that an organization should provide return, should repay for the business and profit making opportunities it is provided with by society;
- **social response** (reaction to topical social problems) that means that an organization complies with the social norms, values and expectations of society (it is supposed that it is an aggregate of voluntary, not forced, decisions and actions).
- **social activity** (prudence followed by advance actions) that means that an organization acts ahead (it supposes attitude, making decisions and performing acts anticipating the events).

It is important for prospective managers to be aware of the significance of and need for social responsibility, in order to perceive themselves as a responsible part of society, to realize that modern times require greater and greater humanization of business and recognition and to a certain extent return to the major universal values and ethics of relationships both in professional and personal aspects. On its part, future managers' special training shall bring to directing the companies to the right manner of thinking of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development.

²⁸ H. Bowen, The social responsibility of Business (New York: 1964), 74.

²⁹ R. Davis, The Meaning and scope of social responsibility, Issues and viewpoints (Englewood Cliffs: 1974), 629.

³⁰ S. P. Sethi, Japanese business and social conflicto (Cambridge: 1975), 19-20.

³¹ M. Friedman, Capitalism and freedom (Chicago: 1961), 133.

³² J. Smith, Business Strategy (Cambridge: 1990), 204.

Conclusion

A conclusion can be drawn that it is the proper and timely use of business etiquette, the development of a time-adequate corporate culture and social responsibility that would ensure the efficient growth of an organization and proper professional relations both within the company (and development not only in group but in individual terms, too), and with the partners and society in general. Therefore it is necessary to apply the knowledge acquired, to develop it into skills, habits and style of behaviour. And knowing the rules of business etiquette and their strict following shall guarantee and secure respect and development in the world of business.

In the course of their training future manages can gain benefits in several aspects – they should not only be acquainted with the newest methods and facts in the area of management, but also take advantages for their personal development. By extending their intellectual horizons, they would stimulate, one way or another, new approaches to business. Prospective managers should be trained to apply new ethical and at the same time profitable approaches related to corporate management, communications and interactions with their colleagues, partners and society.

Based on the representations hereinabove a conclusion can be drawn that it is of great importance for future managers to be trained in implementing the newest management tools, by providing them with opportunities of practical approbation in a controlled environment within the university. It is significant for the syllabi designed for future managers besides managerial skills to cover also ethics, managerial etiquette, social responsibility, and, of course, appropriate direction and motivation of human resources.

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