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## MOTIVATION OF STAFF AND THE HEADS OF MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

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## MOTYWACJA PRACOWNIKÓW I SZEFÓW ADMINISTRACJI MIEJSKIEJ

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**Summary:** Success in the work of the public administration is a result of the quality of human resources. Increasing efficiency in the management of human resources is based on motivation, and it is an important part of ensuring sustainable development of the municipality and its administration. The paper explores and analyzes the motivation of the staff and managers of municipal administration. It is structured in three parts: theoretical and methodological foundations of motivation, motivation profile and competences; analysis of results of a survey among employees of the municipal administration; summary and conclusions.

**Keywords:** motivation, motivational and competency profile, municipal administration.

**Streszczenie:** Sukces w pracy administracji publicznej zależy od jakości zasobów ludzkich. Zwiększanie efektywności w zarządzaniu zasobami ludzkimi opiera się na motywacji i stanowi istotną część zapewnienia zrównoważonego rozwoju gminy i jej administracji. W pracy omówiono i przeanalizowano motywację kadry zarządzającej i administracji komunalnej. Artykuł składa się z trzech części: teoretycznych i metodycznych podstaw motywacji, motywacji i kompetencji; analizy wyników badań wśród pracowników administracji miejskiej; podsumowania i wniosków.

**Słowa kluczowe:** motywacja, profil motywacyjny i kompetencyjny, administracja miejska

### 1. Introduction

The state and local administration face the challenge to provide efficient and quality administrative services to the population by continuously improving and refining their skills and competencies. The system of public administration at various levels (local, regional, national) indicates gaps and weaknesses that have an impact on the individual elements of this system. Improving the quality of the administration at

various levels is associated with the improvement of human resource management, including improvement of the civil service and staff; recruitment for the administration on the basis of professional qualification and appropriate payment; an efficient and economical structure of the administrative bodies; accordance with the functions and structure of the administrative bodies; improvement of connections for manual control, cooperation, and coordination between different administrative units; involvement of employees in decision-making process; flexible administrative control, focused primarily on achieving strict results derived from administrative actions, not just compliance with strict procedures; introduction of new information technology; and improvement of feedback from citizens on the quality of the administrative action.

Success in the work of public administration is mostly due to the quality of human resources that it manages to attract, retain, and develop. In today's complex and changing economic environment, methods, techniques, and tools for securing and maintaining qualified, motivated, highly productive, and loyal staff, able to realize the objectives of the organization in the medium- and long-term, are even more purposefully sought and implemented. Increasing efficiency in the management of human resources is linked to motivation and is an important part of the implementation of reforms and ensuring sustainable development of organizations and structures.

This study examines and analyzes the motivation of employees and managers of administration at municipal level applying verified for business methodology that includes survey and face-to-face structured interviews. The paper is structured in three parts, namely: presentation of theoretical and methodological foundations of motivation, motivational profile, and competences; presentation of results of a survey among employees from the municipal administration; summary of the findings and conclusion.

## **2. Theoretical and methodological aspects of motivation, competence, motivation and competency profiles**

### **2.1. Motivation and motivational profile of employees**

The motivation of human resources is closely linked to the preservation of organizational culture and values that are important to achieving high efficiency. To achieve reciprocity or mutuality, empathy interests and beliefs, it is necessary to take into account what causes people to give the best of themselves for their own and organizational interests. To motivate people is to steer them in a certain direction, undertake the necessary steps to get them there.

Motivation can be perceived as the force that causes people to act in a certain way, i.e. an activator, guiding human behavior to achieve certain results (targets). The main objective of motivation is to encourage employees to be willing to do good

work. The motivation of each individual is provoked by various factors motivators that are different formulations for the individual, and the same factor motivator has varying degrees of importance and satisfaction. For the purposes of practical research 10 of the most important factors motivators were used, identified from previous studies that have the greatest significance for motivation in the work process and achieving excellent working results, and that provide conditions for successful career development (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Factors motivators building motivational profile

Payment
Job security
Good relations within the team
Opportunities for further training
Working conditions
Good attitude on behalf of managers
Social benefits
Diverse and interesting work
Recognition of personal abilities
Independence at work

Source: own work.

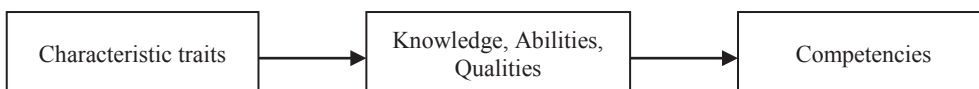
An evaluative (inquiry) card was used to build the motivational profile of employees, in which each of the surveyed employees must answer the question of significance of the above-mentioned factors motivators, arranging them from most important to least important one for overall motivation in the work process, and to assess the degree of satisfaction (resp. frustration) for each of the factors. Based on the summaries and information provided, with methodological character the motivational profile was built, which inherently contains several areas supporting us, relevant information on the degree of motivation of employees, and the identification of potential areas of intervention to enhance work motivation.

- The first zone of the motivational profile (closest to the center of the graph) represents the actual motivational profile of human resources. This is the area of their real satisfaction from the impact of the main motivating factors. By essence, this is the utilized motivational potential of the organization;
- The second zone of motivational profile (second in terms of distance from the center of the chart) is characterized by ambiguity and perhaps indifference to human resources, regarding the impact of individual motivators. This is the area where, to the greatest extent, there are reserves for a possible raise of the level of motivation;
- The third zone of the circle, located between the second zone of the motivational profile and the very shape of the circle, characterizes the dissatisfaction of human resources from the effects of different motivating factors.

## 2.2. Skills and competence profile of staff

The concept of competence, in its essence, is associated with the indicators of job performance of employees, and thus, it gets wide popularity and application in modern theories for improving the preparation and work motivation of employees.

In essence, competence is a quantitative and qualitative accumulation in the relation presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Steps of manifestation of competence

**Source:** own work.

The main types of competencies that are essential for good results in job performance and motivation of employees in the administration can be differentiated in the following areas:

- a) Core competence – this is a summarized presentation of the basic competencies that ensure the normal operation of the employee’s work environment.
- b) Professional competence – formed and manifested in specific activities of employees.
- c) Social competence – characterizes the interaction of the employee in the social environment and relationships with other members of the team and the staff of the organization.

The method of assessment of job competencies covers the following six key steps:

- Step 1.** Defining criteria for efficiency in job performance.
- Step 2.** Identification of reference criteria and indicative benchmarks.
- Step 3.** Collection, classification, and summary of the information.
- Step 4.** Analysis of information and building a competence model.
- Step 5.** Approval of the developed competence model.
- Step 6.** Preparing the application of the developed competence model.

The development of competence profiles is a good information base to conduct targeted analyses in some (or all) of the following areas:

- (1) Identification of problem areas of competence of staff.
- (2) Establishment of reserves and possibilities for improving the level of competence, in this field, increase in the preparedness and motivation of staff.
- (3) Establishment of a link between targeted and precise increase in the level of competence and its effects for the best job performance.
- (4) Establishment of a relationship between increasing the training and qualification of employees, based on defined management competencies, and stage of career development.

Building competence profile of employees is based on the rating assessments provided for each specific competence rating scale for the degree of influence on the level of job performance. By ranking them this way, a wide range of competences are chosen with the utmost importance for the job position and job performance, and the level of motivation of employees to be included in the competence model building (development) of competence profile. Competence profile is built on a graduated circle divided into 6 to 12 equal parts according to the number of competencies included in the competence model.

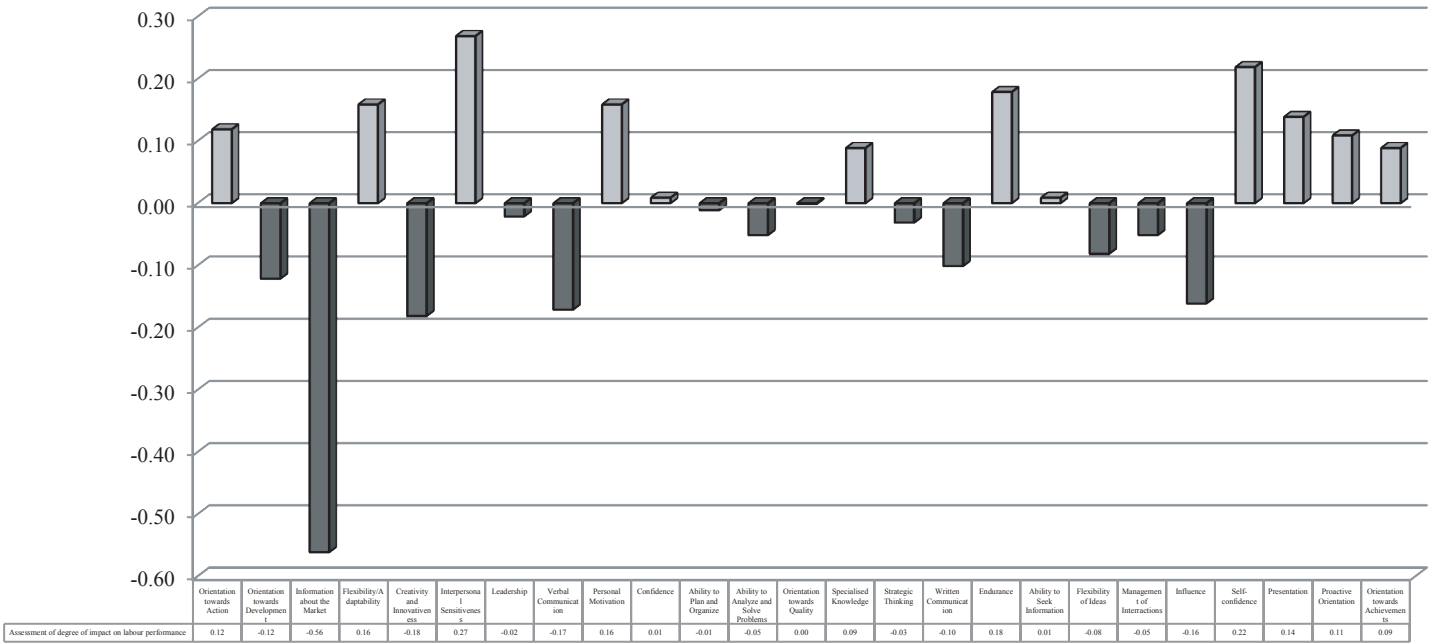
The radius of the circle corresponds to the number of competencies included in the competence model, and each radius is marked with the rated assessments to determine the extent of ownership of specific competencies as presented on a Rating Scale, identified for the purposes of the study.

Key competencies, used for the building up of the competence profile of employees of the administration, in order of importance for good job performance and motivation in the labor process, are: orientation to action; development orientation; market awareness; flexibility/adaptability; creativity and innovation; interpersonal sensitivity; leadership; verbal communication; personal motivation; persuasiveness; ability to plan and organize; ability to analyze and solve problems; orientation towards quality; specialized knowledge; strategic thinking; written communication; sustainability; ability to search for information; ideological flexibility; management of interactions; influence; confidence; presentation; proactive orientation; orientation for excellence. From the above-mentioned wide variety of competence factors the competence model includes those 6 to 12 competencies that are classified as the most significant for the studied population of employees in the organization.

### **3. Results from the study**

The study was tested in a municipal administration (large regional center, one of the 28 regional administrations in Bulgaria) and covered employees at all levels, from expert staff, to low-level managers, to senior executives in the municipal administration. The sample included 60 employees (28.43% of total staff) of all administrative and structural units of the municipal administration. Data analysis was carried out in the evaluation of 55 valid questionnaires (92% validity). The survey was conducted in May–July 2015. The aim of the study was to test the implementation and application of business already approving international methodology to public sector and to identify bottlenecks and restrictions that were not relevant for public administration.

The first question, associated with job performance of municipal employees, reflects the degree of ownership of specific knowledge, skills, and experience to perform the duties included in tasks. The evaluation of representatives of the municipality sits at 25 identified key competencies necessary for work performance. When comparing the average marks for having the competence for employment



**Figure 2.** Assessment of the degree of influence of the competence possessed on job performance

Source: survey conducted by the authors.

performance against the average score for all competencies, the most significant and insignificant competencies for employees of the municipality are identified (Figure 2).

From the data presented, the 5 most significant competences can be displayed:

- Interpersonal sensitivity – interaction with colleagues and subordinates in a sensitive and effective manner; respects and works well with others.
- Confidence – the ability to state their position on issues; decisive to take decisions when required and to compel subordinates.
- Sustainability – maintaining effective working behavior in times of crisis or difficulty; remains peaceful, stable and under control.
- Personal motivation – works hard to achieve personal and organizational goals, shows enthusiasm and career commitment.
- Flexibility/adaptability – successfully adapts to changing demands and conditions inside and outside the organization.

At the same time, according to employees of the municipal administration, the 5 least important competencies are:

- Market awareness – considers problems in terms of costs, profits, markets, and added value.
- Creativity and innovation – creates and uses new and creative approaches to issues related to work. It shows willingness to seek alternatives to traditional offerings.
- Verbal communication – speaks clearly, fluently, and in a manner compelling not only individuals but also groups of people.
- Influence – the ability to use different methods to get support for ideas, strategies, and values.
- Oriented towards development – the ability to create a positive working climate.

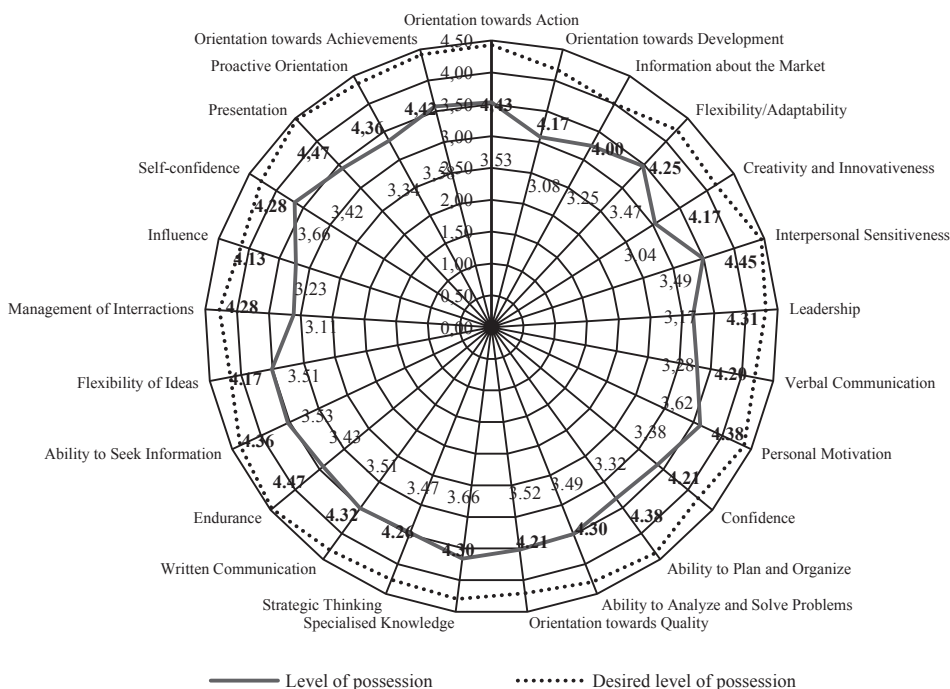
Basic knowledge and skills show differentiation in the grades of possessed competencies, which are linked to the evaluation of their work performance.

At the same time, not all competencies are equally possessed or desired to be further developed.

When comparing the evaluation of the degree of possessing specific knowledge and skills to the degree of the desired level of respective competencies possessed, areas with high potential for the development of knowledge and skills of employees in the municipal administration were identified (Figure 3).

According to the data from the figure, the following areas with the highest potential for the impact on the possessed competencies are identified:

- Managing interactions – the ability to involve subordinates in the work and ability to build collaborative teams.
- Leadership – motivates and empowers others to achieve organizational goals.
- Creativity and innovation – creates and uses new and creative approaches to issues related to work. It shows willingness to seek alternatives to traditional offerings.
- Oriented towards development – the ability to create a positive working climate.



**Figure 3.** Evaluation of the level of competence possessed for job performance

Source: survey, conducted by the authors.

**The second question**, which is associated with job performance of municipal employees, reflects the degree of motivation of every employee in the performance of employment duties.

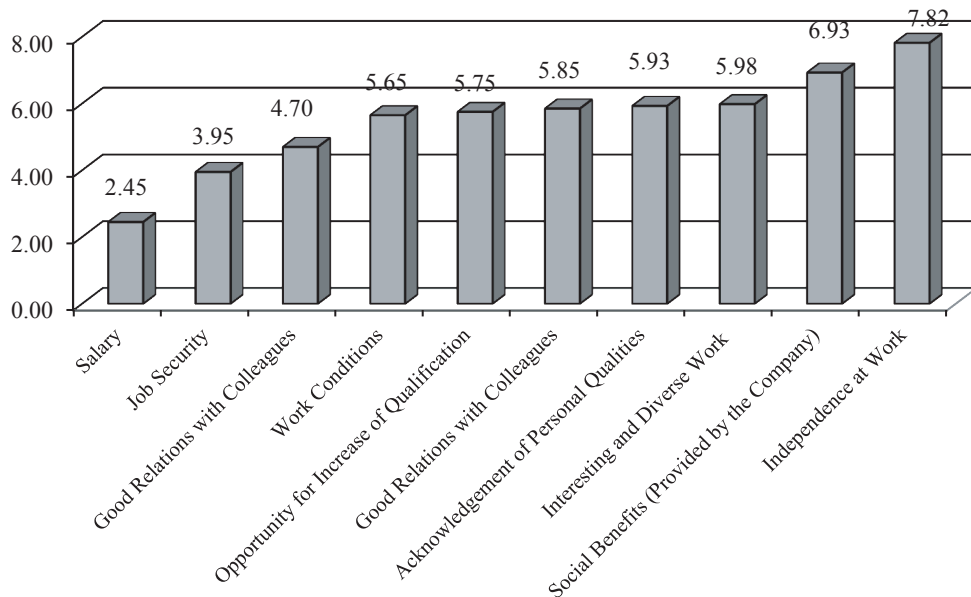
According to this survey, not all motivating factors equally affect employee motivation in the work process (Figure 4).

According to the data, we can make the following generalizations about motivating factors in the municipal administration:

- The strongest factor motivator is salary, respectively wages (2.45), followed by job security in the municipal administration (3.95), and good relations within the team (4.70).
- Two factors occupy the bottom of motivating force: social benefits (6.93) and autonomy in work (7.82).
- The differences between the other five factors motivators are insignificant within  $\pm 3.0\%$  of the group average (5.83).

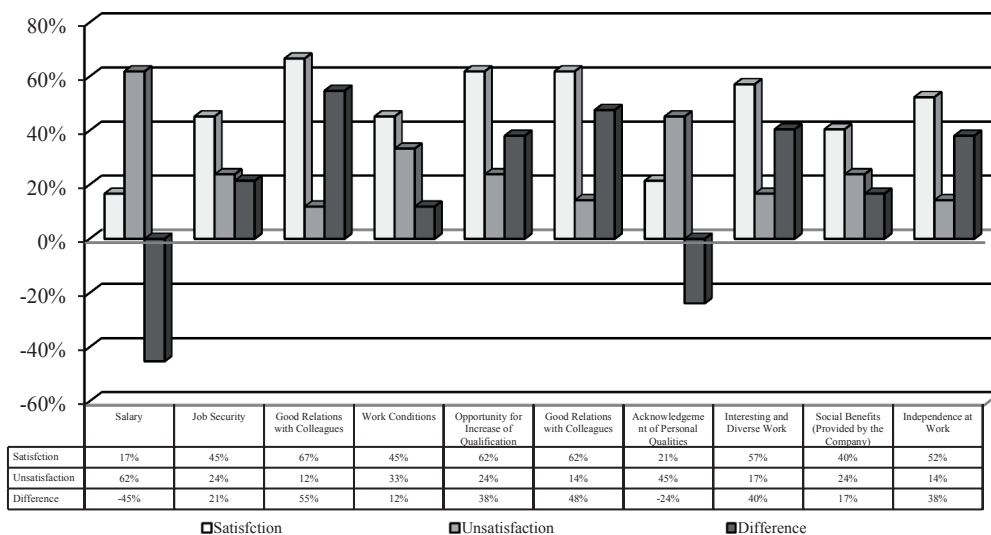
In addition to the above-mentioned factors, the observed employees are not equally satisfied with the level of use of individual factors motivating them (Figure 5).





**Figure 4.** Assessment of the degree of influence of the main factors – motivators on job performance

Source: own work.



**Figure 5.** Assessment of the degree of satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and the difference between them on the main motivating factors, having an impact on job performance

Source: own work.

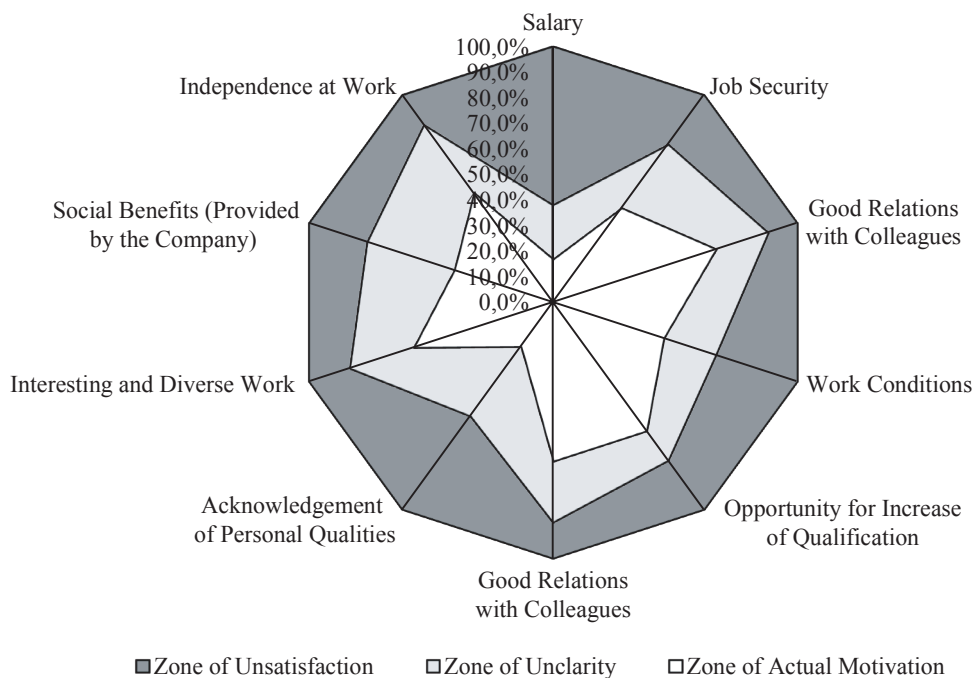
Accordingly, data can identify these factors in which there is the highest degree of satisfaction of employees of the municipal administration:

- good relations within the team,
- opportunities for further qualification,
- good attitude of the managers.

At the same time, satisfaction is at the lowest, including the highest degree of discrepancy between satisfaction and dissatisfaction, in the following factors – motivators:

- payment of labor,
- recognition of personal abilities.

The data presented allow to construct a motivational profile of employees as well (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Motivation profile of employees of municipal administration

Source: own work.

By analyzing the motivational profile presented in Figure 6 we can also identify areas for improvement in employee motivation.

Moreover, the scale for improvement is the biggest where, respectively, there are reserves for improvement, in case of less important factors – motivators where the level of satisfaction is relatively high, such as:

- social benefits provided by the municipality (36%),
- independence at work (33%),
- job security (31%).

Accordingly, the smallest area for improvement is the one where, respectively, there are tiniest opportunities for impact and lowest degree of satisfaction on important factors for the employees, such as:

- payment (21%),
- working conditions (21%).

In summary, when comparing individual performance to the average indicators of employees in the municipal administration, we can identify the areas of intervention of the heads of municipal administration, which may first lead to increased personal work motivation of each employee, and, on the other hand, this increase is at the expense of further improvement of competencies required for job performance of that employee. These areas of intervention are individual and depend both on the individual level of possessed and desirable competencies, and motivation of the individual profile of each employee of the administration.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Conducting activities that motivate municipal administration is inextricably linked to the objectives of the municipality, as a subject of public authorities at local level by synchronizing them with the goals and interests of the individual members of staff.

Regardless of the relatively limited opportunities for motivation of staff in the public sphere, determined by the current legislation and status of the managing bodies of local government, there are opportunities for individual or functional units for motivation of the employees. The analysis points out “wage” and “working conditions” as the most important factors for employees. There are greater opportunities for leaders in the municipality in terms of providing a greater degree of autonomy and initiative in the work of employees, involving them actively in the management process, providing opportunities for expression of innovation and manifestation of the creative workflow, recognition of the personal qualities of each employee and implementation of a differentiated approach for their stimulation, as well as opportunities for further training.

The analysis indicates the presence of preconditions and opportunities for effective employee motivation on the part of the management team through knowledge of the motives, incentives, and desires of staff. The individual approach to motivating employees in the municipal administration is essential as it addresses the needs of any person for the purpose of proper and timely reasons. It is also important to track the change of personnel needs due to various factors. The establishment of that amendment necessitates constant contact and communication with staff, so as to achieve a positive effect by changing the applied motivation.

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