

## THE PERSONAL FEATURES OF WOMEN DIFFERENT LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT

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**Abstract.** Despite the fact that management, as a specific field of professional activity, makes a special demands on its subject, depending on the level of management, there are practically no psychological studies for today that examine personality characteristics of women managers at different levels of management hierarchy. Nevertheless, there is a women active penetration to management in various fields of activity and the emergence of a new social category of "business women", which determined the relevance of "female" management features study. The aim of this study was to find out the main peculiarities of women lower, middle and higher levels of management personality traits. Methods of research: theoretical analysis of the problem, psychognostic method of collecting empirical material, conventional methods of statistical data processing and analysis. The comparative analysis data of women managers' personality traits severity revealed a number of differences between the values of personal characteristics of women lower, middle and top levels of management. The comparative analysis data made it possible to identify that personality traits are mostly expressed on higher level managers, which are further can be considered as a components of management personnel professional growth resource. The necessary for top level of professionalism achievement by women managers are: task orientation of the person, stressors tolerance, communicative and organizational skills, motivation for success, androgyny, the ability to act autonomously, personal growth, the aim in life and internality.

**Keywords:** management, levels of management, lower lever of management, middle level of management, top level of management, career ladder, woman manager, personal factors of career growth, psychognostics, comparative analysis.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the main criteria for manager professional success is the promotion on career ladder, and this aspect of professional growth is in focus of many researchers nowadays. Foreign psychologists consider factors of career growth: professional choice, professional roles, professional creativity and achievements, profession satisfaction. The stages of career development and its dynamics are studied, personal attitude to the career representations of various social groups regarding career. Career is viewed from the standpoint of typological and behavioral approaches (Busenitz, 1997) (Domsch, & Ladwig, n. d) (Meuers, 1995) Rosine & Korabik, 1996).

In Russian psychology, much attention is paid to the study of managers' personality traits, as personal resource of professional growth, contributing to professional development and career growth, which means movement to the top of career ladder. A large number of works are devoted to this topic, including the works of (Bodalev, 1998) Ya. A. Chernishev, (Klimov, 1996)

The urgency of the study of "female" management features was determined by the active position of women in management in various fields of activity and the emergence of a new social category of "business women". Even in the first psychological works devoted to the study of women managers' psychological characteristics, the attention of researchers was emphasized on their career growth opportunities. At present time, Russian and foreign work reflects well the psychological problems arising in women related to making their professional careers (Chirikova, 2000) (Korabik & Rosin, 1995) (Levadnaya, 2001) (Semenova, 2011) (Palludi, 2007).

Theoretical and methodological prerequisites have been created for singling out the psychology of the women career as a new scientific direction. Despite a large number of studies revealing the interrelationship between sex and career, an analysis of the scientific literature on this topic shows that studies devoted to the women career success are usually limited to describing the psychological characteristics of women's management and management style. At the same time, for the time being there are practically no psychological studies that consider the personal characteristics of women managers at different levels of management hierarchy, despite the fact that management, as a specific field of professional

activity, make special demands on its subject, depending on the level of management. Lack of knowledge about the peculiarities of women managers' personal characteristics standing at different levels of management was the source of the study scientific problem. The aim of this study was to identify the personality traits features of lower, middle and top levels of management women managers.

In accordance with the aim, the following theoretical and empirical research tasks were solved:

1. Based on the analysis of Russian and foreign literature, consider the state of the problem of identifying personal characteristics that contribute to the career success of women managers at different levels of the management hierarchy, and to create the necessary theoretical justification for the research undertaken.
2. Through theoretical analysis, highlight personal characteristics that contribute to the career success of managers.
3. Identify the most significant (basic) personal characteristics that make up the personal resource of successful women managers.

## 2. METHODS

The research methods included: a theoretical analysis of the problem, a psychognostic method of collecting empirical material, methods for processing and analyzing statistical data (methods of descriptive statistics, a method of comparing mean values using Student t-test for dependent samples).

Filling of the methods was carried out on an individual basis. All in all, 47 indicators were analyzed, 6 of which are data on the level of professional career, experience, age, marital status, number of children and the level of education.

To study the individual psychological characteristics of the individuals surveyed, 11 techniques were used. The most informative methods were used, which included: an indicative questionnaire by V. Smekal, M. Kucher, for personality orientation determining (Smekalov & Kucher, 2013); the technique for diagnosing the motivation for success and fear of failure (Fetiskin, Kozlov & Manuilov, 2005); "Questionnaire of psychological tolerance to stress and individual stressors" (Raspopin, 2009), compiled on the basis of the author's model of stress-tolerance (Raspopin,

2009); "COS-2" technique (definition of communicative and organizational skills), by Sinyavsky, V.V. Fedoroshin V.A. (Fetiskin, Kozlov, Manuilov & 2005); the technique for diagnosing the internality and externality by Bazhina, E.F., Golyunkina, E.A. and Etkind, A.M. which aim is to determine the control localization (Fetiskin, Kozlov, Manuilov & 2005); the test of resilience, which is an adaptation of Leontiev D.A. questionnaire Hardiness Survey, developed by the American psychologist Salvatore Maddy (Maddi, 2006); "The scale of psychological well-being", which is a Russian-adapted version of the English-language technique, developed by K. Riff (Riff, 1995). The following methods were also used: V.I. Andreev's "The level of personal competitiveness" (Andreev, 2009); Bem Sex Role Inventory, which was used to diagnose the psychological sex and determine the degree of androgyny, masculinity and femininity of the person (Bem, 1981); the technique "The level of personal readiness for risk ("PSK" by A. Shubert); S.A.Reizas confidence-no confidence questionnaire (Rudestam, 1990).

### 3. RESULTS

As a result of the first stage of the study, the most informative (basic) women managers' personality traits were identified: personal orientation, psychological tolerance to stress, personal competitiveness, communicative and organizational skills, androgyny, personal readiness for risk, confidence, internality-externality, motivation for success and fear of failure, psychological well-being (Table 1).

Table 1. Research indicators and techniques for its diagnosis

№	Indicators, techniques and its authors	№	Indicators, techniques and its authors
1	(I) Personal competitiveness (V.I.Andreev Questionnaire)	25	False scale
	(II) Indicators of communicative and organizational skills («COS-2», V.V.Sinyavski, V.A.Fedorshin)	26	(VII) Confidence-nonconfidence (S.A.Reizas Questionnaire)
2	Communicative skills		(VIII) Locus of control indicators (E.F.Bazhin, E.A.Golikin, A.M.Etkind Questionnaire)
3	Organizational skills	27	General internality
4	(III) Bem Sex Role Inventory	28	Internality in the field of achievements

	(IV) The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being indicators	29	Internality in the field of failures
5	Positive Relations with others	30	Internality in family relations
6	Autonomy	31	Internality in the field of production relations
7	Environmental Mastery	32	Internality in the field of interpersonal relations
8	Personal Growth	33	Internationality in the field of health and disease
9	Purpose in Life		(IX) Personality orientation indicators (V.Smekal, M.Kucher Questionnaire)
10	Self-acceptance	34	Personal orientation
11	(V) Not willingness to take risks («RSK», A.M.Schubert Questionnaire)	35	Community orientation
	(VI) Indicators of psychological tolerance to stress (E.V.Raspopin Questionnaire)	36	Task orientation (H3)
12	General psychological tolerance of the person to stress	37	(X) Motivation of success and fear of failure (A.A.Rean Questionnaire)
13	Negative social assessment tolerance		(XI) Hardiness indicators («Hardiness Survey» S.Maddi)
14	Negative self-esteem tolerance	38	Commitment
15	Uncertainty tolerance	39	Control
16	Shortage of time tolerance	40	Challenge
17	Information overloads tolerance	41	Hardiness
18	Physical overwork tolerance	42	(XII) 1- Lower level of Management, 2-Middle level of Management, 3- Top level of Management
19	Monotony tolerance	43	(XIII) Experience (years)
20	Isolation (loneliness) tolerance	44	(XIV) Age (years)
21	Situations specific threat tolerance	45	(XV) Marital status
22	Everyday stressors tolerance	46	(XVI) Number of a children
23	Unexpected stressor tolerance	47	(XVII) Education: 1 - secondary education, 2 - vocational school or college, 3- higher education
24	Duration and frequency of stressors tolerance		

Next, the results of a quantitative analysis of indicators compared values of basic personality traits of women managers divided into three groups according to different levels of management are given (Figure 1).

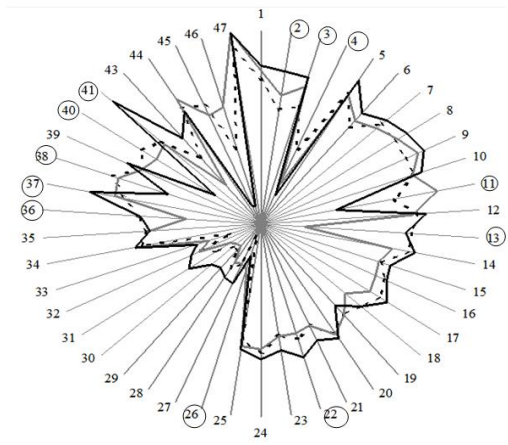


Figure 1. The average values of the surveyed samples of the lower, middle and top levels of management women managers

Note: The names of the indicators are given in Table 1. The values of the indicators, extracted from different techniques, expressed in points, are translated into a single hundred-point scale. The radii postponed the results of diagnosis in points.

The numbers of indicators are circled around, the values of which reveal the most significant differences (reliable at the level of  $p \leq 0,05$ ,  $p \leq 0,01$ ,  $p \leq 0,001$ ).

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The results of two samples comparison: *lower and middle levels of management women managers* are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of the average values of the surveyed samples of lower and middle levels management hierarchy women managers

Indicator №	Sample Groups				Student t-test	Significance level of compared quantities
	Lower level of Management	Points	Middle level of Management	Points		
1	108,5	72,33	116,23	77,48	-2,831	$p \leq 0,01$
3	11,94	59,7	14,31	71,55	-3,211	$p \leq 0,01$
4	0,73	36,04	0,31	15,30	2,581	$p \leq 0,05$
6	51,22	60,97	54,77	65,20	-2,373	$p \leq 0,05$
13	13,16	65,8	12,17	60,85	2,154	$p \leq 0,05$
14	13,28	66,4	11,63	58,15	2,771	$p \leq 0,01$
18	11,88	59,4	9,69	48,45	2,745	$p \leq 0,01$
36	31,31	52,18	28,06	46,76	2,566	$p \leq 0,05$
40	18,94	63,13	16,23	54,1	2,049	$p \leq 0,05$
43	13,75	38,19	18,11	50,30	-2,061	$p \leq 0,05$
<b>46</b>	<b>1,03</b>	<b>34,33</b>	<b>1,77</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>-4,372</b>	<b><math>p \leq 0,001</math></b>
47	2,69	89,66	3,00	100	-2,671	$p \leq 0,01$

Note: The table includes indicators, with significant differences between. The names of the indicators are given in Table 1. In bold type, indices are marked, the values of which differ at the highest level of reliability ( $p \leq 0,001$ ).

The comparative analysis results are graphically presented in Figure 2.



Figure 2. The average values of the surveyed samples Women managers of lower and middle levels of management

Note: On the vertical scale, the average values of the indicators calculated in points are plotted and then translated into the hundred point scale. On the horizontal scale are the indexes of the techniques given in Table 1.

The results of a comparative analysis of the surveyed samples of lower and middle levels women managers revealed 12 differences. The most significant difference is at the level of  $p \leq 0,001$  in the quantitative values of the indicator of the number of children (Indicator 46), which are more in the representatives of the middle management level.

As for the comparative analysis of the mean values of the indicators of women managers of middle and higher levels of management, it should be noted that there are significantly more differences between these samples (32).

Table 3. The comparison of the average values of the surveyed samples of middle and top levels management hierarchy women managers

Indicator №	Sample Groups				Student t-test	Significance level of compared quantities
	Middle level of Management	Points	Top level of Management	Points		
1	116,23	77,48	120,39	80,26	-2,067	$p \leq 0,05$
2	12,77	63,85	15,55	77,75	-3,437	$p \leq 0,01$
5	<b>63,46</b>	<b>75,54</b>	<b>71,39</b>	<b>84,98</b>	<b>-4,766</b>	<b><math>p \leq 0,001</math></b>
6	54,77	65,20	59,73	71,10	-3,037	$p \leq 0,01$
7	58,71	69,89	64,67	76,98	-3,324	$p \leq 0,01$
10	60,26	71,73	64,15	76,36	-2,131	$p \leq 0,05$

11	16,20	81	5,76	28,8	-3,676	$p \leq 0,001$
12	159,54	66,47	176,06	73,35	-3,503	$p \leq 0,001$
14	11,63	58,15	13,91	69,55	-3,588	$p \leq 0,001$
15	10,69	53,45	11,82	59,1	-2,092	$p \leq 0,05$
16	11,00	55	12,30	61,5	-2,540	$p \leq 0,05$
17	11,54	57,7	13,55	67,75	-2,916	$p \leq 0,01$
18	9,69	48,45	11,79	58,95	-3,078	$p \leq 0,01$
21	10,57	52,85	12,42	62,1	-3,999	$p \leq 0,001$
22	10,91	54,55	13,79	68,95	-4,870	$p \leq 0,001$
23	10,94	54,7	12,52	62,6	-3,411	$p \leq 0,01$
24	12,34	61,7	13,42	67,1	-2,012	$p \leq 0,05$
27	19,29	14,61	35,67	27,02	-4,261	$p \leq 0,001$
28	5,60	15,55	9,24	25,66	-2,047	$p \leq 0,05$
29	2,14	5,94	7,94	22,05	-4,485	$p \leq 0,001$
30	2,14	7,13	7,18	23,93	-3,861	$p \leq 0,001$
31	2,69	8,96	10,27	34,23	-5,669	$p \leq 0,001$
33	2,14	17,83	2,94	24,5	-2,114	$p \leq 0,05$
34	32,80	54,66	27,91	46,51	3,218	$p \leq 0,01$
35	27,77	46,28	31,79	52,98	-2,227	$p \leq 0,05$
37	13,09	65,45	15,61	78,05	-5,373	$p \leq 0,001$
38	36,00	66,66	40,06	74,18	-2,722	$p \leq 0,01$
39	29,57	57,98	33,58	65,84	-3,335	$p \leq 0,01$
40	16,23	54,1	18,55	61,83	-2,156	$p \leq 0,05$
41	81,80	56,41	92,85	64,03	-3,789	$p \leq 0,001$
45	1,14	57	1,36	68	-2,141	$p \leq 0,05$
46	1,77	59	0,91	30,33	5,034	$p \leq 0,001$

Note: The table includes indicators, between which there are significant differences. The bold type indicators which values are differ at the level of reliability  $p \leq 0,001$ .

The comparative analysis of middle and top levels of management hierarchy women managers is clearly shown in Figure 3.

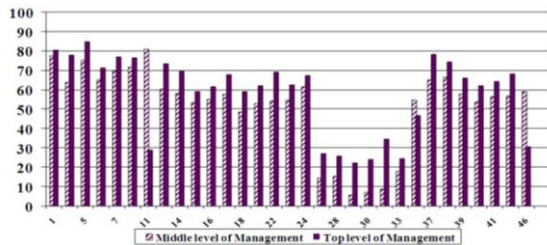


Figure 3. Surveyed samples of middle and top levels managerial hierarchy Women managers average values

Note: On the vertical scale, the average values of the indicators calculated in points are plotted and then translated into the hundred point scale. On the horizontal scale are the techniques indexes given in Table 1.

In this case, the most significant differences reliable at the level of  $p \leq 0,001$  between the indicators were also analyzed. The comparative analysis results of middle and top levels women managers samples showed the greatest differences ( $p \leq 0,001$ ) in values of indicators of positive relations with others, risk readiness, general psychological tolerance of person to stress, negative self-esteem, and everyday stressors, indicators of general internality, internality in the field of failures, in family relations and in the field of work relations, as well as in the values of showing motivation to success and fear of failure, hardiness, the number of children. The average values of the indicators are higher in the sample of top level women managers. Accordingly, it can be concluded that for all indicators in which there were significant differences at the level of  $p \leq 0,001$ , the level of the characteristics studied among women - top managers is brighter than that of middle-level representatives. Perhaps, these traits are the base in women managers' achieving career growth, since they are clearly manifested in representatives of the top level of management.

The exception is the number of children indicator (Indicator 46), which is larger for representatives of middle level management sample. Apparently, a woman manager with two or more children has less opportunity to pay attention to their professional growth. We can assume that the orientation towards family values is strengthened, and the motivation for building a career and professional growth to the level of top managers is reduced. This may also be

due to the fact that achieving an average level of professional career is sufficient for most representatives of women managers, which is also a significant factor that manifests itself in lowering the motivation to move up the career ladder.

The reduced level of risk readiness among the women of middle managers can be explained by the fact that on the middle level there is less responsibility and less authority than at top management level, so they have to make much less decisions in conditions of uncertainty.

Summarizing the results of the quantitative analysis of the comparative values of the indicators of the personality traits of women managers according to different levels of management, it can be concluded that the women managers personality traits, important for professional growth and career success, namely: communicative and organizational skills, motivation for success, vitality, at the top level. It should be noted that at the top level of management the basic women manager personality traits are more expressed. In the middle-level women managers' sample, these characteristics of the leader's personality are less expressed, since for most, this level is sufficient in their professional career, when the women manager is forced to switch attention to her family responsibilities. This is indicated by "number of children" indicator allocation. At women-managers of the lowest level, as at beginning executives, the average values of indicators, as a whole, in comparison with the indicators of the average and the top level, are lower. However, they have a risk acceptance indicator that tell us the person's conviction that everything that happens to her contributes to her development due to knowledge extracted from the experience - whether positive or negative, so she is ready to risk in the process of her professional activity.

Thus, the comparative analysis data made it possible to identify the personality traits most expressed in personality of top managers, which can be considered as components of personal resource of professional growth. The necessary for achieving a top level of professionalism by women managers are: person's the task orientation, tolerance to stressors, communicative and organizational skills, motivation for success, androgyny, the ability to act autonomously, personal growth, the existence of a goal in life and internality.

#### 4. DISCUSSIONS

Firstly in the course of the study, the most significant (basic) features of woman manager personality were identified. These include: person's task and collectivist orientation, the motivation for success, the general psychological tolerance of the person to stress and other stressors (situations of uncertainty, time deficit, information overload, everyday stressors, duration and frequency of stressors), as well as communicative and organizational skills, the internal locus of control and hardiness. The totality of these personal factors makes the growth of psychological well-being indicators.

Secondly, a number of differences in the basic features of the personality of women managers at different levels of management have been found. The lower level managers are characterized by involvement to activity and acceptance of the risk. They, more than others, have the characteristics of femininity. Features of middle level of management representatives are reduced responsibility and risk-readiness, tolerance to negative social assessment and low task orientation. Women-managers of the top level of management are distinguished by the task orientation of the individual, stress tolerance, developed communicative and organizational skills, androgyny, and desire for personal growth, expressed internationality and high level of hardiness. They also have the highest rates of psychological well-being.

The results obtained made it possible to formulate the following practical recommendations:

- When organizing and conducting activities for the purpose of professional selection and career guidance for women managers, it is recommended that the diagnosis of basic personal characteristics that constitute a psychological and personal resource of professional growth be recommended.
- When drawing up training programs for women managers' personal growth, it is recommended to focus on the personality traits development that make up the women manager personal resource of professional growth.
- In connection with the high importance of stress-tolerance indicators, it is advisable to organize special training measures for women managers at different levels of management, which allow coping with the most common stressors that have

specificity at each level of the management hierarchy.

In the training programs for future managers at the faculties of management of the organization and psychology in universities, it is recommended to include a special course "Psychology of the female career".

Further research prospect consists on revealing the personal factors of women managers' career success features of the structure, which are depending on the age, field and specifics of professional activity. Attention is drawn to the existence of a close relationship between gender characteristics; in particular, androgyny, and the essential characteristics of women managers' personality, and an independent subject of further research may be the elucidation of gender characteristics that contribute to their professional effectiveness. It is of great interest on woman manager career development influence such qualities as initiative, ambition, careerism, perseverance, and also the motives of a professional career.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

At the present stage of organizational psychology development, special attention is paid to researching the factors of the subject professional growth. Including topical are the studies concerning the career growth of managers, as representatives of the social stratum, which plays a significant role in modern society. The main criterion for the professional success of the manager is the promotion on the career ladder, suggesting a transition from the lowest to the middle, and then - to the top levels of the management hierarchy. Among the factors contributing to career growth, identify a personal factor, which should include the expression of the basic personal characteristics of a successful manager.

In modern psychology, theoretical and methodological prerequisites have been created for singling out a female career as a new scientific direction. At the same time, there are practically no studies on the personal characteristics of women managers at different levels of the management hierarchy, which served as the basis for the formulation of the scientific problem of this dissertation research, the purpose of which was to identify the features of the expression of personality traits among women managers of the lower, middle and top levels of management.

During the theoretical stage of research, scientific grounds were singled out to make the assumption that the specifics of professional activity and the nature of the requirements for managers at different levels of management determine the severity of personality traits that make up the personal resource of professional growth for women managers at different levels of career growth.

The study was organized by comparing the data obtained with diagnostic sections. Assessment of the severity of basic personality traits was carried out using standardized and approved diagnostic techniques that are widely used in psychological practice. Interpretation of the obtained results was based on the methodological positions of modern psychology and theoretical concepts, which were the basis for constructing the algorithm of the conducted research. In general, the tasks have been solved; the goal formulated on the basis of a material theoretical analysis has been achieved.

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