

# Correlation indicators of employees' conflictological competence and their perception of the company's organizational culture

## Indicadores de correlación de la competencia conflictológica de los empleados y su percepción de la cultura organizacional de la empresa

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### Abstract

The article presents the results of a study of the types of organizational culture and characteristics of conflictological competence of employees. It is revealed that employees choose the clan type of organizational culture as their preferred one. The level of conflictological competence of managers is higher than that of shop workers. Employees with conflictological competence are satisfied with the existing organizational culture. Low level of conflictological competence is associated with dissatisfaction with the organizational culture of the enterprise.

**key words:** conflictological competence, emotional self-regulation, strategy of behavior in conflict, organizational culture.

### Resumen

El artículo presenta los resultados de un estudio de los tipos de cultura organizativa y las características de la competencia conflictológica de los empleados. Se revela que los empleados eligen el tipo de cultura organizacional del clan como su preferida. El nivel de competencia conflictológica de los gerentes es más alto que el de los trabajadores. Los empleados con competencia conflictológica están satisfechos con la cultura organizativa existente. El bajo nivel de competencia conflictológica se asocia con la insatisfacción con la cultura organizativa de la empresa.

**Palabras clave:** competencia conflictológica, autorregulación emocional, estrategia de comportamiento en conflicto, cultura organizacional.

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## 1. Introduction

Currently, the problem of conflictological competence of the individual is being studied quite actively. It has been confirmed that conflict situations are an integral part of everyday public life. Conflicts in the professional sphere have a huge impact not only on the internal interaction of the parties to the conflict, but also on the efficiency of the enterprise as a whole. There is increased attention to organizational culture issues, not only in the scientific environment, but also from the management of companies interested in having a strong organizational culture that ensures the highest productivity and commitment of employees.

The problem of conflictological competence of the individual has been studied by many researchers (Petrovskaya, 1997); Hassan, (2004); Heydenberk & Heydenberk, (2005); Agle et al., (2008); De Angelis, (2010); Kucheryavenko et al., (2010); Lanskih & Ponomarev, (2016); Runde & Flangan, (2010); Borzilova et al., (2016); Antsupov, (2018); Khudayeva, (2019); Romanova et al., (2019). A large number of works are also devoted to the study of organizational culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2001); Shane, (2002); Mizeleva, (2004); Ghinea, (2016); Nesmeyanova & Lipatov, (2018); Polychroniou & Trivellas, (2018). However, there is not enough research on conflictological competence in the context of an enterprise's organizational culture. Studying the concept of conflictological competence, a large part of researchers agree that it is an integral part of communicative competence. According to B.I. Hassan [16] conflictological competence is one of the characteristics of the person, manifested in awareness of strategies of behavior in conflict and ability to use these strategies. L. A. Petrovskaya [13] considers conflictological competence as a set of indicators. This is first an emotional self-regulation of the individual. Second, a reflexive-empathetic stance that provides decentralization in relationships, allowing you to look at situations of conflict from the point of view of an opponent. And the third indicator is a constructive strategy of behavior in conflict [13].

We assumed that the presence of conflictological competence of the staff is associated with the harmony of the image of the real and preferred organizational culture. In turn, the low level of conflictological competence is associated with its disharmonious perception. To study organizational culture, we used the model of K. Cameron and R. Quinn, which includes four types of culture: clan, hierarchical, adhocratic and market. We also used B. I. Hasan's theoretical positions on the functional role of conflict in the organizational culture of the enterprise and L. A. Petrovskaya's model of conflictological competence.

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## 2. Methodology

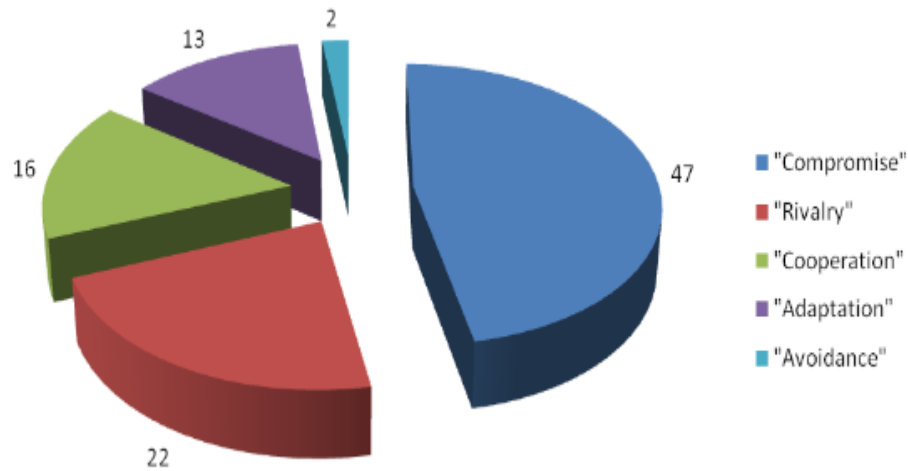
The methods used in the study were organizational (comparative); empirical (poll); methods of mathematical and statistical analysis of data: (t - Student's criterion, Pearson's correlation coefficient). Methods of research: test-questionnaire "Behavior strategies in conflict" (K. Thomas, R. Kilmenn); "Method of diagnosis of the level of empathic abilities" (V. V. Boyko); FPI Multi-Factor Personal Questionnaire (Modified Form B); "Diagnostics of Organizational Culture" (The Quinn and Cameron OCAI Questionnaire). The study was carried out on the basis of the printing house of Belgorod, 68 people took part in it: 30 - managers, 38 - shop workers.

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## 3. Results

At the first stage, we identified the behavior strategies used in the entire sample of subjects. The results are shown in figure 1.

**Figure 1**  
Distribution of subjects by strategies of behavior in conflict, %

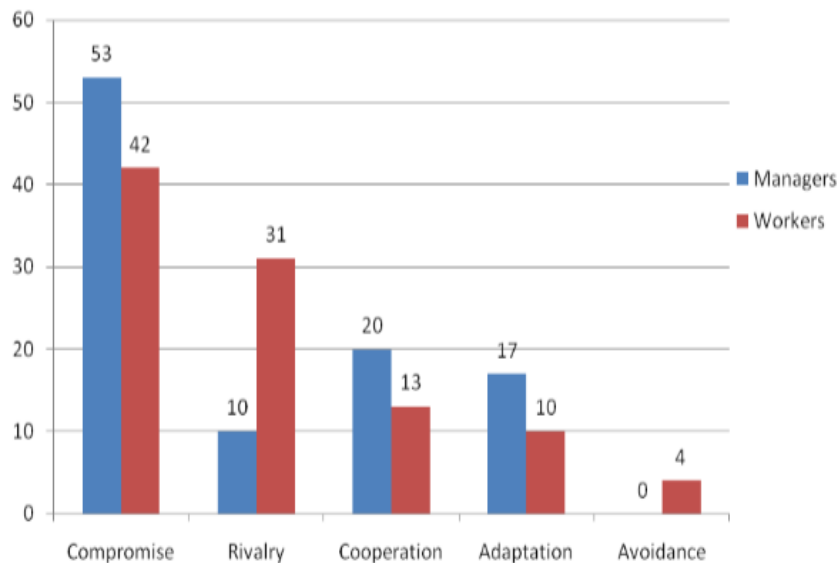


Source: the authors

The most preferred strategy of compromise (47 %), based on mutual concessions and a desire to partially satisfy the interests of both sides of the conflict. The second place is the strategy of rivalry, (22%). Then, strategies of cooperation (16%), adaptation (13%) and avoidance (2%). The results show that the strategy of cooperation, as an indicator of conflictological competence, is not sufficiently expressed in the company's employees.

The compromise strategy is leading in both managers (53%) and shop workers (42%). And the avoidance strategy is the least common (figure 2).

**Figure 2**  
Distribution of managers and workers by strategies of behavior in conflict, %

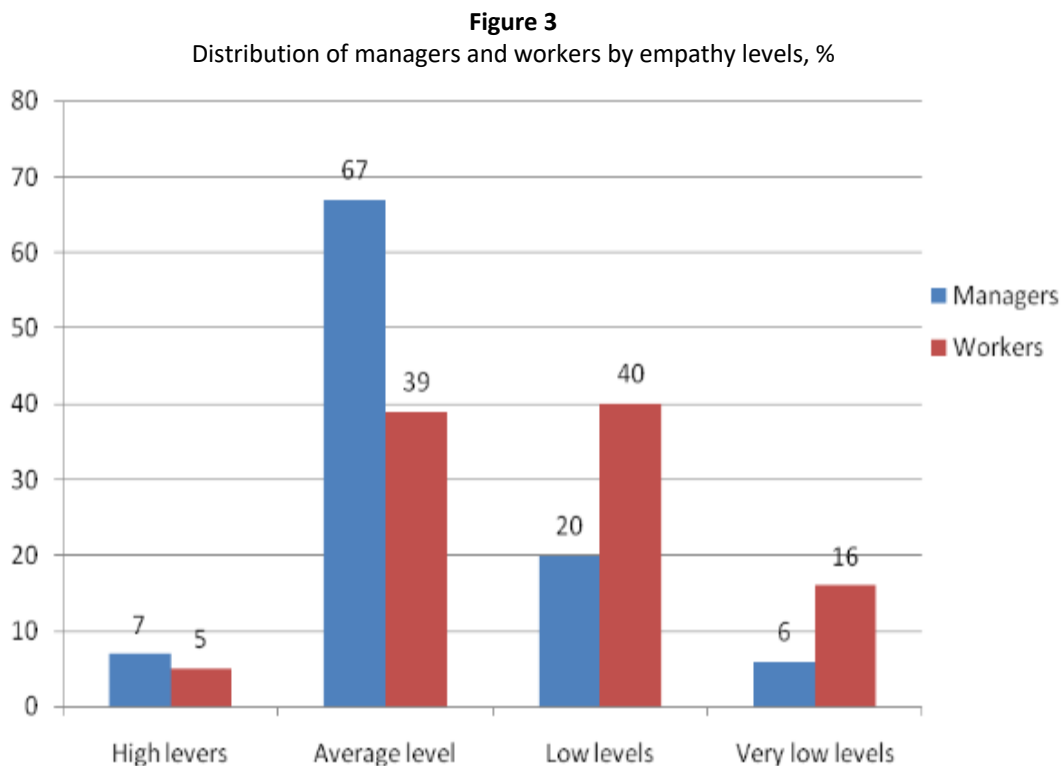


Source: the authors

As figure 2 shows, the next most popular strategies for managers are cooperation (20%), adaptation (17%), and rivalry (10%). While workers have a different sequence: the strategy of rivalry (31 %), cooperation (13%) and adaptation (10%). In other words, managers have a more pronounced strategy of cooperation, which is an

indicator of conflictological competence. This divergence in the choice of behavior strategy between managers and production workers can be explained by the fact that managers in the process of professional activity are more often in conflict situations with colleagues and customers. The manager should offer the optimal way out of the conflict with less losses for both sides, maintain a good relationship with clients and a positive reputation of the organization. Production workers, in turn, prefer a strategy of rivalry, or confrontation, because it is a priority for them to clearly carry out the original task, regardless of third-party circumstances.

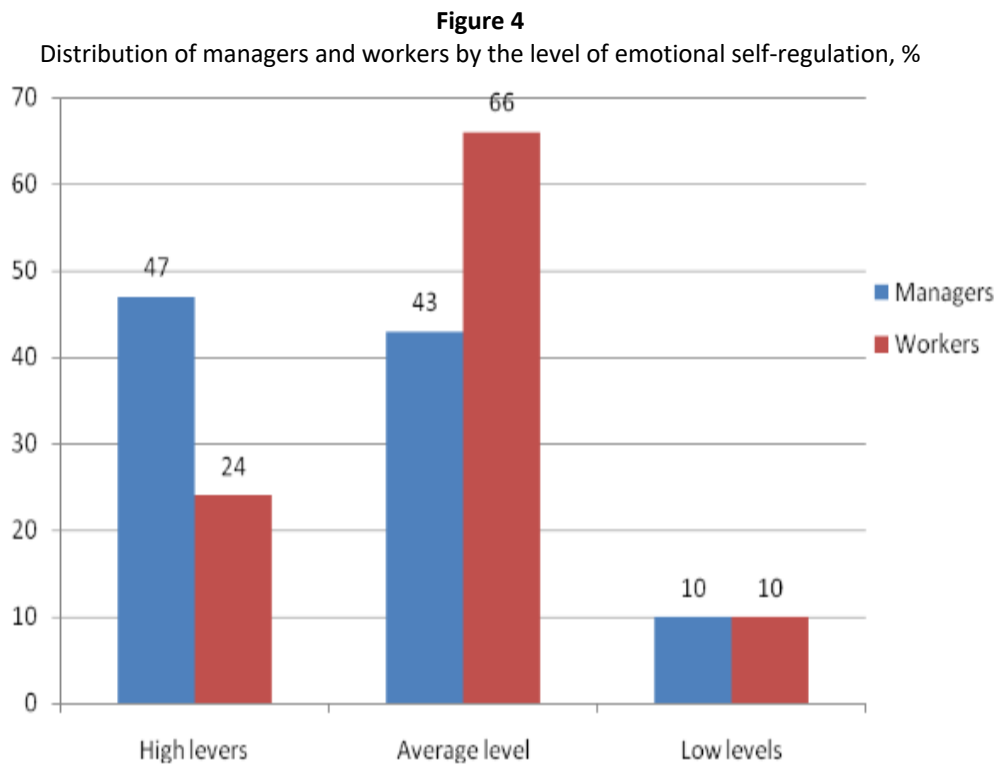
The analysis of the results of diagnostics of empathic abilities is shown in figure 3.



Source: the authors

As figure 3 shows that managers have more pronounced average (67%) and high (7%) levels of empathy. Shop workers are more likely to have low (40%) and very low (16%) levels of empathy. The smallest number of production workers (5%) showed a high level of empathy. This data indicates that managers are more inclined to empathize with the partner, better feel his emotional state. However, further research has shown that there are qualitative differences in the channels of empathy, which will be described below.

The FPI multi-factor personal questionnaire allowed studying the level of emotional self-regulation of the personality (figure 4).



Source: the authors

Indicators of emotional self-regulation were: extroversion - introversion, irritability - balance and emotional lability. The majority of respondents in the entire sample demonstrate an average level of emotional self-regulation. They have developed the ability to respond emotionally to life events in a socially acceptable way. Figure 4 shows that among managers, almost equal numbers of subjects have average (43%) and high (47%) levels of self-regulation, which allows to judge the state of emotional stability, ability to own themselves, as well as high level of stress resistance. The remaining 10% of subjects show low level of emotional self-regulation, manifested in instability of emotional state, tendency to affective reactions.

In the study of emotional self-regulation of production workers, the following was revealed, most of the subjects have an average level of emotional self-regulation (66%), a high level of self-regulation showed 24% of the sample, the lowest number of subjects have a low level of emotional self-regulation (10%). Such results indicate that most workers have a satisfactory level of stress resistance and ability to own themselves.

### 3.1. Subchapter

Summarizing the results of the three techniques allowed identifying levels of conflictological competence. The majority of respondents are classified as average (54%). These are individuals who are characterized by an average level of empathy and emotional self-regulation, choosing a strategy of compromise in conflicts. A quarter of respondents (24%) have a low level of conflictological competence, which is characterized by a low level of empathy and emotional self-regulation, as well as a lack of cooperation in the conflict. Persons with high level of conflictological competence (22%) are characterized by developed empathy and emotional self-regulation, ability to consciously choose a strategy of cooperation.

Further, we compared the levels of conflictological competence in two groups of subjects. Most managers (58%) have an average level of conflict-related competence. For production workers, this figure is slightly lower (48%). In addition, we can note the predominance of low-level conflict-related competence among production workers

(39%) over the same indicator for managers (22%). High level of conflict competence for managers (20%), and for workers (13%).

At the stage of statistical analysis of the study, the Student's t – test was used. Statistically significant differences in the expression of components of conflictological competence in managers and employees of production were revealed. (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
Comparative analysis of the components of conflictological competence of groups of respondents

Indicators	Managers	Workers	Student's t – test
	Average value ± statistical error	Average value ± statistical error	
<b>Strategies for behavior in conflict</b>			
Compromise	8,46±2,06	7,97±2,03	1,457
Rivalry	4,63±2,59	7,31±2,56	8,456*
Cooperation	6,93±2,23	5,34±2,57	5,671*
Avoidance	4±2,04	6,36±2,23	5,221*
Adaptation	7,9±2,14	4,44±2,23	4,281*
<b>Characteristics of empathy</b>			
Rational channel	2,7±2,04	4,8±2,62	6,528*
Emotional channel	4,83±2,77	3,73±2,65	4,592*
Intuitive channel	3.2±2,65	4,33±2,69	3,117*
Installations that contribute to or prevent empathies	4,06±2,83	3,73±2,71	1,157
Penetration	3,6±2,32	3,73±2,40	1,281
Identification	3,36±2,7	3,76±2,52	0,822
<b>Emotional self-regulation</b>			
Extroversion-introversion	7±2,68	5±2,40	6,212*
Irritability	6±2,85	6,1±2,21	0,377
Balance	6±2,68	6±2,40	0,212
Emotional lability	5,8±2,61	5,6±2,19	0,314

Note: \*- p≤0,05.

Source: the authors

There are significant differences in such indicators as rational, emotional and intuitive channels of empathy, extraversion, and strategies for behavior in conflict.

Further the results of the organizational culture study are described. Quinn and Cameron's OCAI questionnaire revealed a real and desired types organizational culture. According to the data received, the company has a market type of organizational culture (GPA = 58), which is characterized by results-oriented, commitment of employees and determination of managers. The features of clan (GPA = 44) and hierarchical (GPA = 49) organizational culture are almost equally expressed. When choosing the desired type of organizational culture, employees give a clear preference to the clan type (GPA = 69). Clan organizational culture is characterized of team cohesion against the background of friendship, mutual understanding and common purpose. Comparison of organizational profiles of two groups of respondents, allows detecting both similarities and differences in them (Table 2).

**Table 2**  
Indicators of organizational culture types in  
managers and employees of production (GPA)

Type of organizational culture	Rating	Gpa (max = 100)	
		Managers	Workers
Clan	Real	53	35
	Preferred	72	66
Hierarchical	Real	38	60
	Preferred	39	38
Adkhocratic	Real	29	29
	Preferred	33	32
Market	Real	60	56
	Preferred	55	57

Source: the authors

In both groups studied, a clan organizational culture is preferred, in which the organization is similar to a friendly family, characterized by cohesion and a favorable microclimate. But there are also differences - so, most managers in the vision of the current characteristics of the organization, tend to a market type of culture, in which the activity is focused on the result. For the workers of the workshop the hierarchical culture is relevant, when the organization is united by formal rules with a strict distribution of duties.

In addition, the technique makes it possible to compare the magnitude of the differences between the expression of the existing organizational culture and the preferred one. Managers have this indicator low, which indicates the harmonious state of the employee in professional activity at the moment. The largest indicator of inconsistency is observed in the assessment of clan culture, which can be interpreted as a shortage of clan-type characteristics, with inherent friendliness, cohesion, mutual assistance and the pursuit of a common goal.

Production workers have inconsistencies in two types of organizational culture. As in the previous group, the assessment of clan culture suggests a deficit in the organization of the traits of collectivism. At the same time, there is a difference between the manifestation of a hierarchical organizational culture at the moment and in the desired situation. This indicates a sense of discomfort due to the underestimation of the importance of the employee's personal contribution to the results of the entire organization.

Thus, when considering the organizational culture of the enterprise, two areas of mismatch were identified. First, the differences in the choice of the existing organizational culture by specialists of different types of professions (managers have the current type of organizational culture of the enterprise – market, shop workers – hierarchical) were revealed. Second, all respondents have a different assessment of the real type of organizational culture and the ideal type. In particular, the perception of actual characteristics of the enterprise is dominated by the market type of organizational culture, and the ideal is the clan type.

In order to identify the relationship between the existing type of organizational culture and the components of conflictological competence, a correlation analysis was carried out using the statistical method "Pearson correlation coefficient." It was found that there is a direct and meaningful link between clan organizational culture in respondents and such components as identification ( $r=0,528$ ,  $p\leq 0,01$ ), strategies of cooperation in conflict ( $r=0,652$ ,  $p\leq 0,01$ ), emotional channel of empathy ( $r=0,814$ ,  $p\leq 0,001$ ). A feedback to emotional lability has also been identified. Thus, individuals with skills in positive behavior in conflict, the ability to empathize and identify emotions, feel most comfortable with clan organizational culture. Such culture implies mutual support and mutual assistance in the staff.

A direct link was identified between a hierarchical organizational culture, adaptation strategy ( $r=0,412$ ,  $p\leq 0,05$ ), and attitudes that hinder and accompanying empathy ( $r=0,465$ ,  $p\leq 0,05$ ). As well as feedback on the strategy of rivalry in conflict ( $r=-0,520$ ,  $p\leq 0,05$ ). That is, the more the individual is prone to confrontation, aggressive behavior in conflict, the less likely the person is to be comfortable in an organization with a hierarchical organizational culture. Conversely, the more the individual is able to show consilience, the more comfortable his stay in such an organization will be.

A direct correlation was established between market organizational culture and such components of conflictological competence as cooperation strategies ( $r=0.637$ ,  $p\leq 0,01$ ), rivalries ( $r=0.412$ ,  $p\leq 0.05$ ), and empathic attitudes ( $r=0.548$ ,  $p\leq 0.05$ ). Most likely, employees who are able to collaborate within the organization, combined with the ability to compete with opponents outside the organization, will feel successful in this type of organizational culture. It can be stated that persons with conflictological competence are satisfied with the existing organizational culture. Low level of conflictological competence is associated with dissatisfaction with the organizational culture at the enterprise.

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#### 4. Conclusions

When comparing the conflictological competence of the two groups of respondents studied, differences were revealed. Managers are more extroverted people, with developed self-regulation, choosing a strategy of compromise, adaptation and cooperation. Managers have developed an emotional channel of empathy but its manifestation is greatly influenced by the attitudes set by a person when entering into contact with a partner. In General, the level of conflictological competence of managers is higher than that of production workers.

A group of shop workers is characterized by a predominance of compromise and competition strategies, introversion, and greater empathy. Such differences in the general picture of conflictological competence can be explained by the fact that managers contact a large number of people daily, enter into conflict situations with different types of people, and have a great experience in conflict resolution. In addition, some managers periodically take courses and trainings to effectively interact with people and increase stress resistance.

Employees of the enterprise choose as the preferred clan type of organizational culture. There is a deficit in the organization of the features of collectivism, with its inherent friendliness, cohesion, mutual assistance and the desire for a common goal. In the assessment of the real type managers are dominated by features of the market type of organizational culture, in the employees of the workshop - features of the hierarchical type of culture of the organization. The group of managers studied showed a greater degree of satisfaction with the current type of organizational culture than the group of production workers, which is due to the higher level of self-regulation of respondents and more effective choice of strategy of behavior in conflict. Thus, the hypothesis put forward by us has been confirmed: the high level of conflictological competence of the personnel is related to the harmony of the image of the real and preferred organizational culture; In turn, the low level of development of conflictological competence is related to its disharmonic perception. Conflictological competence of employees is one of the psychological conditions for harmonization of organizational culture of the enterprise.

The results obtained in the study can be used in psychological practice in advising managers, recruitment managers, employees, as well as in conducting training sessions in the organization aimed at optimizing the organizational culture of the enterprise, uniting the team, increasing productivity efficiency and harmonization of microclimate in the company.



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