

THE ROLE OF THE MENTORSHIP INSTITUTION IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STATE CIVIL SERVANTS

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Annotation: *the article explores the issues of young employees' adaptation to professional activities and the work environment in the development of human resources in the state civil service. In particular, it analyzes sociological approaches to an individual's adaptation and socialization within society. The study highlights the role of the mentorship institution in ensuring the proper integration of young employees into the labor process after entering the state civil service. It also emphasizes the importance of implementing the mentorship institution in a formal and professional manner to enhance young employees' professional skills, foster a responsible approach to job duties, reduce staff turnover, and ensure continuity in the sector.*

Key words: *state civil service, mentorship institution, adaptation, apprentice, socialization, values, norms, corporate environment.*

Nowadays, one of the most pressing tasks in our country is to train and strategically position specialists who ensure socio-political, economic, and legal development for the consistent and effective implementation of reforms in various fields. To achieve this, it is essential to further develop the traditions of mentorship and apprenticeship. These traditions have historically flourished in our country and have become universal values in fields such as science, literature, art, craftsmanship, architecture, medicine, and many others.

Mentorship traditions are widely practiced in many workplaces, including the civil service. At the same time, ongoing reforms in human resource management within the civil service require the formal and professional implementation of this institution. In such conditions, young employees have the opportunity to enhance their professional skills through interactions with their colleagues without being detached from their service activities.

Of course, the mentorship of experienced and leading specialists plays a crucial role in the professional development of young employees. Mentor-apprentice relationships are highly significant for young professionals, as experienced employees not only help them develop their professional skills but also teach them to approach their duties with responsibility, discipline, and accountability. By properly and effectively nurturing young

specialists' abilities, experienced professionals assist them in enhancing their decision-making skills and problem-solving capabilities.

In his Address to the Oliy Majlis, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, stated: "Today, life itself demands that we establish a professional, efficient, and effective civil service system and develop a mechanism that provides broad opportunities for proactive, innovative, and dedicated personnel" [1]. These words highlight the importance of ensuring a more modern and effective civil service system, including the need to study how young specialists can successfully adapt to performing their duties in the civil service.

In the civil service, the adaptation and socialization of young specialists play a crucial role in helping them find their place within the workforce. According to the American scholar Urie Bronfenbrenner, the process of socialization is formed by the sum of all social processes, through which an individual acquires a certain system of norms and values that enable them to function as an active member of society [2]. His theory suggests that during the socialization process, an individual internalizes professional and personal norms, values, traditions, and standards through various social interactions. This process, in turn, contributes to the development of qualities that enable the individual to function fully as a member of society.

From a sociological perspective, the term "adaptation" is used as a result of various social processes. The sociologist Émile Durkheim, within the framework of "structural functionalism", interprets this term as the process by which an individual adapts to the social system, meaning society and its institutions. According to him, adaptation ensures the stability and integration of society. In his work "The Division of Labor in Society", Durkheim analyzes the impact of social norms on human behavior and describes adaptation as the individual's implementation of general social norms, which have a dual and inherently ambivalent nature [3].

In the context of an individual's social behavior, the professional aspects of employees become evident, while the professional characteristics of civil servants are manifested through their personal qualities and distinctive behavioral traits in the process of performing their professional functions. In this regard, Talcott Parsons examines socialization through the lens of "structural functionalism", using his AGIL (Adaptation – Goal Attainment – Integration – Latency) theory to explain the process [4]. The scholar describes "adaptation" as one of the key functions of a social system, meaning that the system responds to external environmental changes through acquired skills, while its members develop the necessary abilities to live within these conditions. In other words, a person becomes part of the social system by "internalizing" the norms, values, and traditions that exist in society through interactions with others [5].

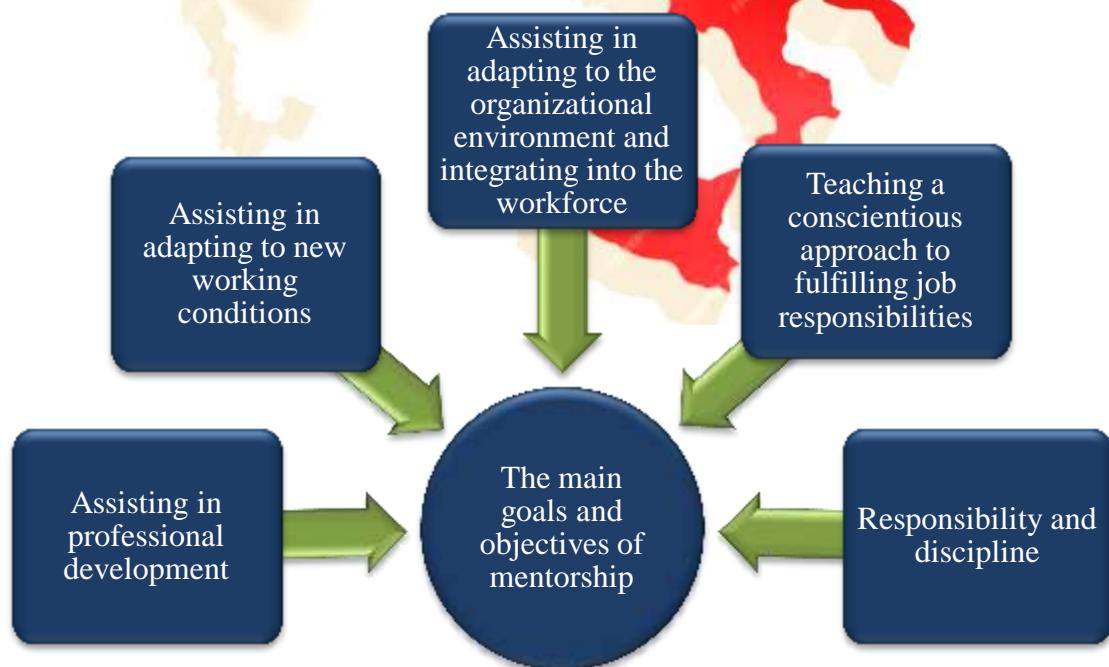
One of the founders of symbolic interactionism theory, George Herbert Mead, analyzed the role of the individual in social interactions through social connections, symbols, and signs. According to him, individuals shape their identities through relationships and learn to align with societal values and traditions through social symbols [6].

Max Weber interprets the concept of adaptation as the process of “finding one’s place in the environment” through rational means to achieve personal goals. According to his theory, an individual is seen as an active subject who does not merely adapt to circumstances but acts meaningfully and purposefully (rationally) in response to them [7].

The “Program of Priority Measures for the Fundamental Improvement of Personnel Policy and the Civil Service System in the Republic of Uzbekistan”, approved by Presidential Decree No. PF-5843 on October 3, 2019, outlines the introduction of a mentorship institute for young specialists in state bodies and organizations, to be implemented by experienced leaders and experts [8].

Indeed, the proper adaptation of young employees entering the civil service to the work process largely depends on the mentorship institute. It is important to emphasize that an individual’s integration into the professional community does not happen automatically. To ensure the stable functioning of the civil service, systematic efforts must be undertaken to develop the workforce. The primary tasks of the mentorship institute in supporting the professional and personal development of young employees are categorized in the following diagram.

Figure 1

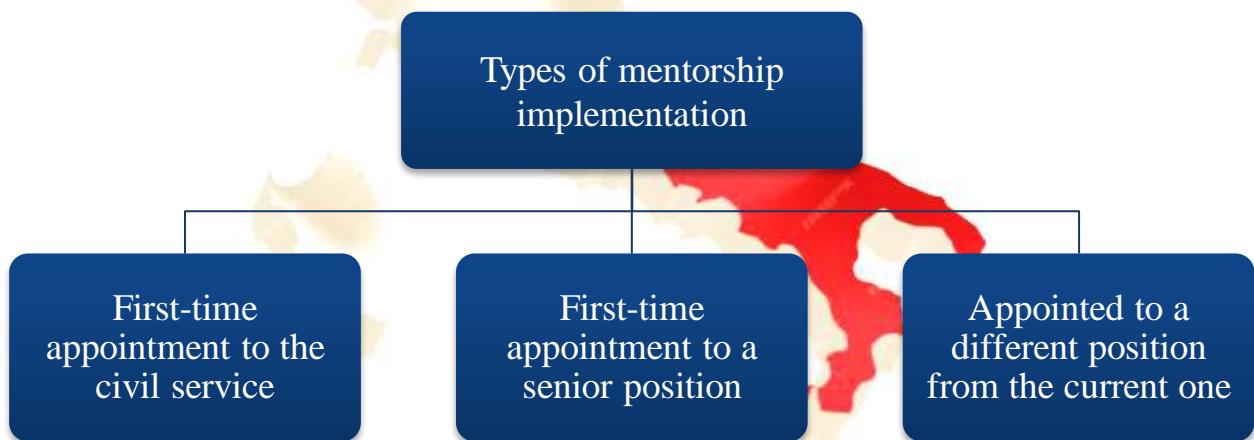


It should be emphasized that ensuring the stability of the civil service requires the implementation of well-thought-out measures to retain and develop its personnel. At the same time, when analyzing staff turnover in the civil service, it becomes evident that the proportion of young employees remains high. The main reasons for this include difficulties in adapting to the professional environment, the complexity of organizational values, and other related factors.

Currently, in practice, some of the individuals who have left the civil service include newly recruited young employees. One of the main reasons for resignation is the difficulty young employees face in adapting to the professional environment and accepting the organizational and cultural values of the institution. In such situations, the successful adaptation of young employees to their jobs and the corporate environment is facilitated through the support of experienced staff within the organization.

The reforms being carried out in the field of human resource development within the civil service require the implementation of mentorship traditions in a formal and professional manner. By analyzing the traditions of the mentorship institute in our country and the organizational-legal mechanisms in this area, we can categorize this process as follows.

Figure 2



As seen in the image above, mentorship is implemented for newly recruited young employees in the civil service, those appointed to senior positions for the first time, and those transferred to a different role within their organization. Additionally, considering the specific aspects of professional activity, mentorship programs can also be conducted in other relevant situations.

The implementation of mentorship by experienced and leading specialists contributes to the professional development of young employees, enhances their sense of responsibility toward their duties, and improves their decision-making skills. A well-structured mentorship program fosters a positive attitude toward workplace selection and

creates a foundation for the young employee's motivation to successfully fulfill their professional responsibilities.

According to sociological surveys conducted by the author in 2024, the majority of respondents (79.6%) stated that working with young employees in organizations should be carried out formally and professionally based on mentorship traditions, taking into account the specific characteristics of labor activity. They also indicated that experienced specialists should be assigned as mentors to young employees.

It should be noted that successful adaptation of an employee requires the assistance of another person – a mentor, who is either an interested or experienced individual. Through the fulfillment of various functions, the mentor influences the motivation and attitude of the mentee (young employee), leading to gradual changes that culminate in full adaptation. Depending on the development level of the mentee, the form of assistance provided by the mentor may gradually become more complex or, conversely, simplified. Given that this process requires a significant amount of time, it is important to recognize that the results of adaptation and the acquisition of professional skills necessary for fulfilling functional duties may not be immediately visible.

Adaptation is the process by which an individual adjusts to changing environmental conditions, differing in terms of time and level:

Time characteristics – Each stage occurs within a specific time frame. During this period, the individual learns about the new environment, adapts to it, and develops the necessary skills for independent functioning.

Levels of adaptation – Each stage corresponds to a specific level of adaptation. As the individual progresses from one stage to another, it indicates their successful integration into the organization's norms, values, and environment, as well as their growing professional independence. This process has a cyclical nature, meaning that certain actions or practices may be repeated throughout the adaptation stages, and tasks are carried out in a sequential manner to achieve the desired goal [9].

In such a situation, the mentor selects methods that contribute to the young employee's professional development on an individual basis. Once the adaptation and professional formation process of the mentee is successfully completed, the mentor's approach is evaluated. It should be noted that the mentorship institution should not be limited to imparting knowledge and professional experience alone. The mentor must also provide moral support to the young employee to reduce risks such as lack of confidence and discouragement. This can be achieved through a structured program that fosters logical thinking, analytical skills, diligence, motivation for goal attainment, discipline, and an increased interest in work and learning.

To ensure the effective implementation of the mentorship process, plans and specialized methodological guides are developed. The absence of clear programs and

structured plans may lead to a superficial approach by employees toward this process. This process is carried out through collaborative problem-solving of professional tasks, discussions on challenging situations, informal meetings, and other methods. The primary responsibility of a mentor is to prepare the assigned young employee for independent work at a high professional level. For this reason, experts recognize mentorship as a complex process that requires a systematic approach [10].

During the adaptation stage, a young specialist enters professional activity and finds their place within the new team. The successful implementation of the mentorship institute helps eliminate challenges related to the professional adaptation of young employees in the civil service, while also reducing staff turnover and minimizing social risks.

Overall, the mentorship institute in the civil service plays a crucial role in ensuring the stability and development of both society and the state. A successfully implemented mentorship system enhances the efficiency of public administration and contributes to the development of human resources. This institute holds significant importance in the personal and professional growth of young employees and remains essential in training specialists equipped with the knowledge and experience necessary for effectively carrying out civil service duties at a high level.

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