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Improving the System for Ensuring Strategic Change Management at Railway Transport Enterprises

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Abstract

A characteristic feature of the modern economy is a high level of instability of the external environment. Digitalization, intellectualization, greening and globalization have exacerbated the already difficult (caused by martial law in the state) conditions of competition between railway transport enterprises in the market of transport and logistics services and caused their unsatisfactory financial and economic condition. Under these conditions, the key to success is strategic management of the enterprise and timely implementation of appropriate strategic changes, but the existing imperfect management system does not allow implementing pre-selected and justified strategies and corresponding strategic changes and improving the existing critical situation. That is why the paper establishes the fundamental features of the development of a system for ensuring the management of strategic changes at railway transport enterprises and reveals the key provisions of its implementation.

KEY WORDS: *railway transport enterprises, strategic changes, management, support system*

1. Introduction

Railway transport enterprises are currently in a difficult financial and economic situation. This is due to the radical transformation of mega trends in the development of the world economy (digitalization, intellectualization, environmentalization, globalization), which is exacerbated by the introduction of martial law in the state and exacerbated by the harsh conditions of competition in the foreign and domestic markets of transport and logistics services. The imperfection of the existing management system of railway transport enterprises does not allow the implementation of selected and justified strategies and corresponding strategic changes, as evidenced by the presence of a large number of unimplemented strategies of JSC "Ukrzaliznytsia". This process is not permanent, because starting from 2006 and up to now, domestic railway transport enterprises have been trying in vain to achieve the established strategic benchmarks. In the managerial arsenal of the management of these business entities, there are: concepts and programs [1-3] (outline generalizing aspects of further development); strategic plans and programs [4] (contain strategic guidelines for development); laws, resolutions, orders of state authorities [5-10] (legislative support of the process of strategic management), etc. Despite the ever-increasing number, over the past 17 years, of this type of documents and programs, railway transport enterprises experience significant financial and economic losses every year. This endangers the further existence of domestic railway transport enterprises.

2. The Research

A detailed analysis of the existing set of strategic development programs and features of the operation of railway transport enterprises [11-12] allowed us to conclude that the existing concept of strategic management is quite acceptable and allows the initial basic functions to be performed qualitatively. As a result, we have a bunch of strategic programs and projects. However, this is not enough at this stage of the development of the domestic and world economy for full and timely implementation of strategies. That is why, in order to create an effective complex of strategic change management, we focus on the formation of an appropriate support system. For completeness of perception, let's briefly dwell on what is the basis of a systematic approach to the management and planning of the activity of a railway transport enterprise. First of all, it should be noted that the system is a purposeful complex of interconnected elements of any nature that form a whole new quality [13-14]. The main system-wide properties that should be taken into account when building a system to ensure the management of strategic changes at railway transport enterprises include integrity, hierarchy, emergency and functionality. Integrity is a system-wide property, which consists in the fact that a change in any component of the system affects all other components and leads to a change in the properties of the system as a whole, and vice versa, any change in the system reacts on its components. The hierarchical nature of the system is that it can be considered as an element of a higher-order system, and each of its elements, in turn, can be a lower-level system. Emergence determines the fact that the sum of the properties of the system elements is not equal to the properties of the

system. Functionality determines that these elements of the system act and interact within the limits of their functional purpose.

A necessary condition for the formation of a system for ensuring the management of strategic changes at railway transport enterprises is the presence of: at least two elements; connections between elements; tectological boundary. The element is an integral part of the system. Further distribution of elements leads to the destruction of its functional connections with other elements and the acquisition of properties of the selected population, inadequate to the properties of the element as a whole. Communication combines elements and properties of the system into a single whole. Connections between elements and subsystems of the same level are called horizontal, and connections of the system with all subsystems of subordinate hierarchical levels are called vertical. A subsystem is distinguished according to certain rules and features as a purposeful subset of interconnected elements of any nature. Each subsystem can be divided into smaller subsystems. The system differs from the subsystem only by the rule and signs of combining elements. The rule is general for the system, and more individual for subsystems. Based on this, the system can be imagined as a whole consisting of subsystems, each of which can be considered relatively independently. Subsystems allocated to the same horizon are subsystems of the same level. The division of subsystems into lower-level subsystems constitutes a hierarchy and means the subordination of a lower level of a higher-level system. Tectological boundaries as a collision area of interaction of several systems (elements of systems) are contours of the system. When forming a system, it should be borne in mind that the goal of the system is the desired state of its outputs, that is, some value or subset of values of the system's functions.

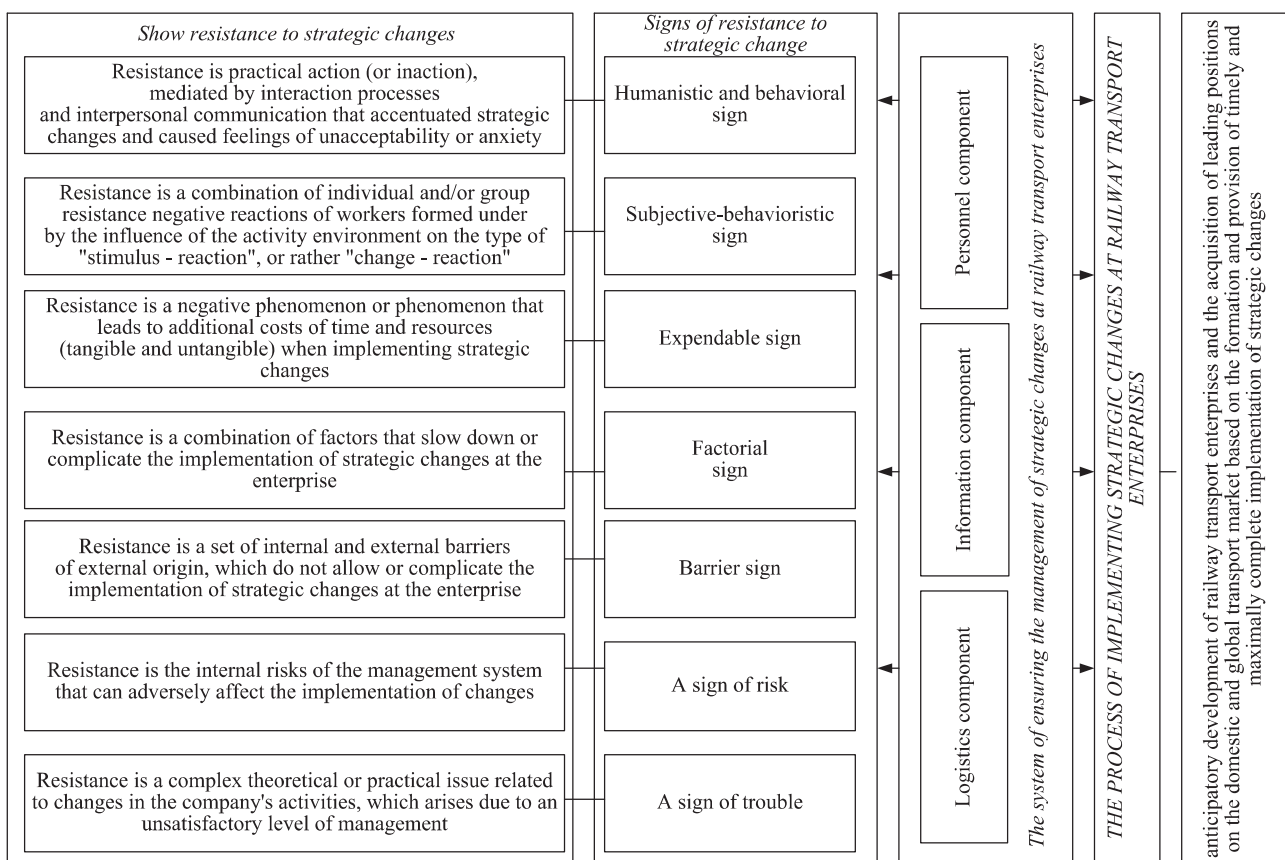


Fig. 1 Model of operation of the system for ensuring the management of strategic changes at railway transport enterprises

The goal can be set from the outside or set by the system itself, in which case the goal will reflect the internal needs of the system. The function of the system is set from the outside and shows what role this system performs in relation to the more general system in which it is included as a component, along with other systems acting as its external environment. Any change in the function produced by the environment causes a change in the system's functioning mechanism, and this leads to a change in the system's structure and connections. A system exists as long as it functions.

Based on the above, let's build a system taking into account the fact that any strategic changes, regardless of the high quality of their planning, usually experience resistance that nullifies all efforts. That is why the proposed system for ensuring the management of strategic changes at railway transport enterprises is based on the above, and therefore should become a certain kind of tool for overcoming resistance to the implementation of strategic changes (Fig. 1).

The personnel, information and logistics components allocated within the system will allow not only to purposefully direct the efforts of the railway company's management, but also to create a basis for ensuring the effectiveness of the process of implementing strategic changes.

Information provision as the basis of a market-oriented concept will make it possible to increase the flexibility and

adaptability of the enterprise's activity to changes in the external environment. Logistics support, as a system- and cost-oriented concept, provides an opportunity to implement the process of strategic changes in an optimal way and to coordinate conflicting goals that may arise in the enterprise's activities.

Today, the tasks and significance of logistics in the process of managing changes at the enterprise are not defined, which does not allow purposeful management of the market activity of the enterprise. After all, the success of information support in the process of change management also depends on logistical support. Information and logistics support add some utility to the initial ideas of implementing changes in the enterprise, forming their general utility. Let's consider in more detail what components make up the usefulness of strategic changes at the enterprise, and what logistical support is necessary for their creation.

The value and usefulness of any strategic change at the enterprise (technical, technological, organizational, etc.) is called formal utility. However, for the enterprise, as a rule, it is important not only that the change carried out should have formal utility, it should also be present, that is, occur at the required time and in the required place in the enterprise in order to bring the maximum economic effect. Additional utility to the change implemented at the enterprise and added over and above formal utility is called utility of place, time and ownership.

Logistic support (Fig. 2) gives the change the usefulness of place (effective organization of transportation and storage of raw materials and materials from the producer to the consumer) and the usefulness of time (stock management, speeding up the movement of goods), and information support - the usefulness of possession (development of the necessary technical and economic parameters, design, packaging, recognizable trademark, quality level, provision of credit services, etc.).

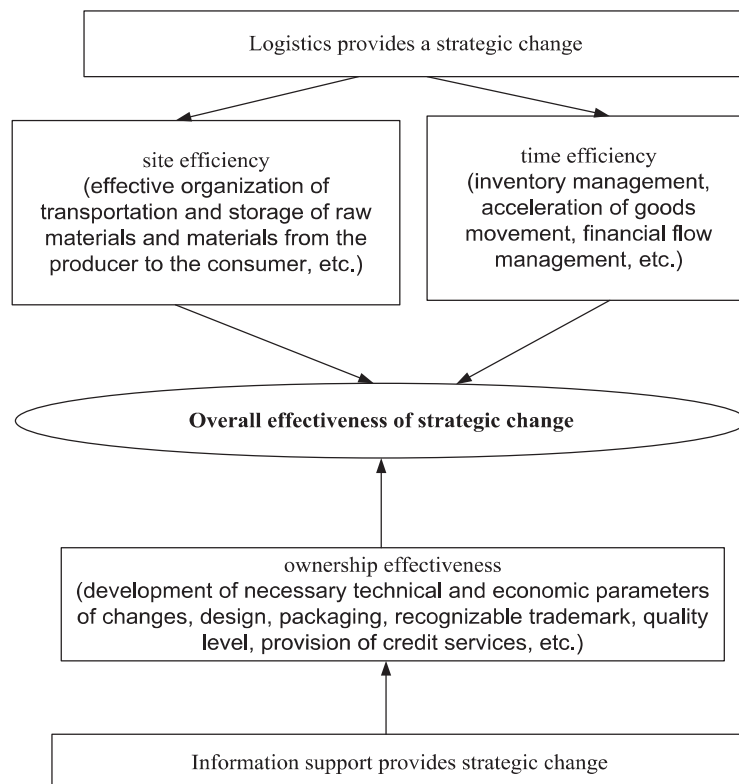


Fig. 2 Informational and logistical support for the effectiveness of strategic change implementation

Taking into account the fact that one of the main obstacles to the effective implementation of strategic change at the railway transport enterprise is resistance from the employees, and the basis for improving the quality of strategic changes is the presence of highly intelligent employees, that is why we will establish the peculiarities of knowledge management as a component of the comprehensive support of strategic change management. The successful development of railway transport enterprises depends on the ability to generate and develop qualitative strategic changes to a greater extent. Strategic changes are a social phenomenon that requires joint, forward-looking, creative work. In other words, it is "action in interaction."

Strategic changes should be an organizational norm supported by an appropriate organizational culture. Such successful initiatives as TQM (total quality management) and Six Sigma may well be considered strategic. Initially, these concepts were applied in production. However, over time, they began to be implemented in other spheres of activity, as they help to change not only specific processes, but also the entire corporate culture.

In the economy, not any action can be called a strategic change, but only one that qualitatively increases the effectiveness of the current system and ensures the implementation of the chosen strategy in the future. Finding strategic solutions is not easy, you need to know where to look. By implementing strategic changes, it becomes possible to increase revenue and their image by 40-60%. Among the least strategy-oriented companies, this indicator is equal to 20.7%.

For the purpose of cooperation with external organizations, strategically oriented companies use social networks more often. This figure for them is 67% compared to 39% of the companies least focused on strategic changes.

It is impossible to implement a strategic decision in the activities of railway transport enterprises alone. Each employee must understand the full extent of responsibility, try to minimize risks and work for results. However, before plunging into the world of strategic change, a manager must know and be sure that:

- strategicness, systematicity, interaction, employee motivation and the effect of the result are the main drivers of this process;
- colleagues are aware of the expediency of strategic change, and also share the strategy;
- every employee is success-oriented — able to set specific goals for the near future, learn from mistakes, achieve successes and celebrate them;
- employees are satisfied with three motivational components: "stomach" - salary, comfortable office, social package; "brain" - career growth, development; "heart" - why do I need something new, working in a promising company;
- all issues are discussed openly, feedback is established;
- team members support each other's strategic initiatives and others.

That is why, the decisive role within the personnel component of the strategic change management system at railway transport enterprises belongs to the modern HR manager, who must take an active role at all the main stages of strategic change management. At the stage of preparation of strategic changes, its main tasks are:

1. Organizing the strategic plan of changes. A strategic approach means that more and more attention is paid to human resource management issues, so top managers involve HR managers in the development of organizational strategy. This becomes one of the most important types of their professional activity.
2. Diagnostics of the enterprise's readiness for strategic changes. The existing organizational culture can be an obstacle to planned transformations or, on the contrary, be a catalyst for change. Deep and comprehensive knowledge of the HR manager's type, features, possible directions of transformation, organizational culture of his organization is the most important condition for the successful implementation of strategic changes.
3. The transmission of the vision of future strategic changes, the development of communication strategies, the formation of a communication system within the enterprise should be organized in such a way that all employees have reliable information about the goals, methods and expected results of future strategic changes. For this, the HR manager must not only possess the abilities, knowledge and skills that will be needed in the implementation of these changes, but also train the staff in a timely manner.
4. Analysis of the "field of forces" of supporters and opponents of strategic changes, formation of a coalition of supporters of transformations, selection of a team of strategic change agents.
5. Identification of potential risks associated with expected resistance from the staff, development of measures for its early reduction and elimination.

3. Conclusions

The low quality of strategic management decisions and actions, as well as the existing critical technical-technological and financial-economic state of railway transport enterprises, made it necessary to find organizational measures and theoretical approaches to ensure the process of managing strategic changes at railway transport enterprises. In order to create an effective complex of strategic change management, which would allow to overcome the existing shortcomings, the provisions of the formation of a system for ensuring the management of strategic changes at railway transport enterprises were revealed. This system should become a certain kind of tool for overcoming resistance to the implementation of strategic changes, and the personnel, information and logistics components allocated within it will allow not only to purposefully direct the efforts of the company's management, but also to create a basis for ensuring the effectiveness of the process of implementing strategic changes.

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