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TRANSFORMATIONS OF DECISION-MAKING LINES IN MODERN MANAGEMENT - INFORMATIZATION OF DECISION-MAKING

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Abstract: *In today's business environment, management faces key transformation challenges due to globalization and digitalization. In order to maintain a competitive advantage, organizations are increasingly oriented towards agile management, which implies flexible decision-making structures and quick adaptation to changes. Key components of this process include continuous education and development of managers to ensure their ability to effectively lead teams in a dynamic environment. This requires the application of advanced project management techniques, the use of business intelligence for decision-making, and a focus on the development of software tools to support managerial processes. All in all, management in the modern context requires rapid adaptability and continuous learning in order to achieve successful competition in the global market. Digital transformation, through the implementation of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation and data analysis, is also becoming key to achieving efficiency and innovation in management. This enables better understanding of market needs and optimization of internal processes. Technological progress and computerization of business processes have led to a reduction in administrative tasks and the need for traditional management at lower levels. The first and middle line of management are gradually disappearing because administration and information systems have taken over most of the routine tasks. This puts pressure on middle management to adapt and develop new skills to stay relevant. Training and support for middle management become crucial to successfully face these challenges. Organizations must invest in their managers to train them for new roles in changed decision-making structures. Although these changes cause uncertainty, they also open opportunities for management to develop and contribute to the innovation and success of organizations. With regard to further development, it is expected that technology, agility, inclusiveness and sustainability will be key factors in the management of the future.*

Keywords: *transformation, middle line of decision making, administration, information technologies*

INTRODUCTION

Modern management and human resources management represent the key pillars of successful management of organizations in the era of global challenges and geopolitical changes accompanied by constant development. Today's business environment is characterized by dynamism and unpredictability with the increasingly massive use of artificial intelligence. Globalization has blurred the lines between markets, and technological innovation is constantly changing the way we work. In addition, the importance of social and responsibility in business is being emphasized more and more, especially with regard to the preservation of the environment. All of these changes require organizations to adapt and innovate in order to survive and thrive. This is exactly where the skill of managing human resources as well as the organization itself comes to the fore. Management basically includes planning, organizing, leading and controlling the organization's resources in order to achieve goals. This entails making decisions, managing operational processes and leading teams. On the other hand, human resource management focuses on the people in the organization. This includes recruitment, training, motivation, performance appraisal and employee development. Many people ignore that employees are the most important resource of any organization and that they are a segment without which any effort to improve business is in vain.

In modern management, the key word is adaptability. Organizations must react quickly to changes in the environment, whether it is changes in customer needs, competition, legislation or technological innovation. This requires management that is not only efficient, but also innovative and capable of rapid adaptation. Of course, the question that is just being opened is how to adapt to the mass use of artificial intelligence in business activities.

The most important transformation in management in the last forty years is reflected in adapting to contemporary challenges and a dynamic business environment. Key changes include digital transformation, globalization, evolution of organizational structures, emphasis on agility and innovation, development in the field of human resource management, increased corporate responsibility and change in the perception of leadership. Digital transformation brings a revolution in the way of doing business, setting new standards for fast communication and data analysis. Globalization has forced organizations to compete globally, while organizational structures have enabled better collaboration and

innovation. The focus on agility and innovation reflects the need to adapt to rapid changes and market challenges. These changes reflect the necessity of continuous learning and adaptation in order to achieve competitive advantage and sustainable success in modern management. Human resource management is undergoing a serious transformation. Traditional models of control and supervision are increasingly giving way to models that promote independence, innovation and engagement of employees. Today, management is exposed to exactly these challenges (Alnoor et al., 2021). It is fundamental to discover how modern management and human resource management will function in the time to come. At the same time, it is important to focus on key terms such as changes in the hierarchical structures of organizations, the relationship between micro and macro perspectives in management, ethical aspects of business, technological impact on human resources and many other aspects. At the same time, issues of human rights and freedoms significantly influence policies when it comes to human resource management. The question is how to motivate and develop diverse teams of people who bring different perspectives and skills. Human resource management has evolved from a traditional model to an inclusive approach that promotes diversity and employee development. Increased corporate responsibility encourages organizations to practice sustainable business models and socially beneficial operations. The emergence of new leaders emphasizes the importance of inspiration, motivation and cooperation with employees. What can we expect further in the future? One thing is certain, what we also need to think about here is how the future will create the education process, especially the organization of work and learning at faculties, because digital transformation, artificial intelligence, concentration of knowledge and the labor market have their own views and interests when it comes to the scientific and educational process.

ARE DECISION LINES ERASER

Management is the process or function that is the most important for every company and includes the business of managing companies. The term management originates from the English word “manage”, which denotes the successful disposal of certain resources and means, i.e. the ability to perform a given job. The derived word “management” is translated as management, and we understand it as management

Of course, management begins with making key decisions. This includes identifying the problem, setting goals, and considering different

options for achieving those goals. After making decisions, management is engaged in planning, which implies the creation of strategies and plans in order to achieve goals. Planning refers to the short-term and long-term actions that the organization should take. Organization is about setting up structure and allocating resources to achieve goals. This includes assigning tasks and responsibilities to different people or teams. Leadership deals with directing and motivating people to carry out planned activities. This includes communication, problem solving, employee support, and creating a work environment that encourages productivity. And finally, control is the process of monitoring and evaluating progress toward goals. This entails comparing actual results with planned results and taking corrective actions if necessary.

Management is a dynamic process that requires continuous adaptation and optimization in order for the organization to be competitive and efficient. It is important to note that management is not reserved only for executives or managers because every employee can apply managerial principles in their daily work, thus contributing to better organization and achieving goals if they are not completely “chained” by administrative procedures that “think for them”.

DO WE SEE CHANGES IN THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Forecasting as a term is most often understood as the course by which the growth and development of the company moves on the operational level, but at the same time the position of the company on the domestic and international market. Activities that are the consequences of managerial predictions often imply a change in the organizational structure and represent a rational response to events. The purpose of such activity is the choice of business activities, resource allocation and creation of a sustainable competitive advantage, and its essence is to enable the company to cope with the challenges brought by the market and at the same time operate profitably (Greiner1972). The company defines and realizes its vision and mission. in cooperation with internal and external factors, but also with the limitations that these factors bring. Managers have an obligation to take a detailed look at the course of business, analyze the circumstances and predict the future course of events. Therefore, the manager must understand, monitor and predict the scope of chances and dangers in the environment and, taking into account the strong and weak companies, determine the way and direction of business.

The way the company is managed changes with the development of the environment. If the company achieves and maximizes business goals through a combination of financial, material and personnel resources, then the total risk depends entirely on the quality of managerial forecasts. Management, as stated in the introduction, has undergone a significant transformation in the last forty years, reflecting profound changes in the business environment, technology and society. Even today, we are witnessing certain changes in the skill of managing business processes.

The changes that are dominant and most visible are:

- a) Digital transformation,
- b) Globalization,
- c) Change in hierarchical structures,
- d) Agility and innovation,
- e) Human resource management,
- f) Corporate responsibility and sustainability and
- g) Emergence of new leaders and managers.

Given that the following chapters deal with the mentioned concepts in more detail, now follows a short explanation of the mentioned changes:

- a) The arrival of information technologies and the Internet has changed the way business processes take place. Management has had to adapt to rapid changes in technology, including automation, data analytics, artificial intelligence and the global Internet. Digital transformation has changed the way decisions are made, data analyzed and communicated with employees and clients.
- b) The ubiquity of global markets has had a significant impact on management. Organizations are forced to compete globally, which requires adaptability, understanding of different cultures and cooperation with different markets.
- c) Traditional pyramidal hierarchies are increasingly giving way to “flatter” organizational structures. This enables faster communication, greater flexibility and better utilization of talent in the organization.
- d) Organizations increasingly focus on agility and innovation. Management must adapt to withstand rapid change and continuous innovation in all aspects of business.
- e) Classical human resource management, which focuses on administration and control, is giving way to a more modern approach that promotes employee engagement, skill development, inclusion and diversity.

- f) Increased awareness of social and environmental responsibility has led to the transformation of management. Organizations are increasingly committing to sustainable business practices and socially beneficial operations.
- g) New leaders must be more open, inclusive and able to communicate and cooperate with employees at all levels. Their ability to inspire and motivate teams is critical to the success of the organization.

MANAGEMENT vs. ADMINISTRATION

These changes have caused a revolution in management and led to the need for continuous learning, adaptation and innovation in approaches to managing organizations. Management today requires a higher level of agility, a broader perspective and a greater willingness to accept changes compared to the traditional management approach of previous decades. These changes significantly transformed management because they enabled a significant part of business activities to move from the sphere of independent decision-making by managers to the sphere of administrative control and to be realized according to clearly prescribed procedures (Alnoor et al., 2021). This results in the almost complete disappearance of the first line of management as well as part of the middle line of management. The mentioned space was filled by the administration, and there are several reasons. The theory of losing the battle of first and middle management in dealing with the administration and informatization of business processes investigates how the role of first and middle management in organizations is transformed due to changes in technology and business practices.

It may seem that both terms, administration and management, are broadly one and the same, but there is actually a significant difference. In order to make this clearer, it is important to understand that here we view administration as performing tasks without the possibility of making decisions during the business process, but performing tasks according to clearly defined procedures. This is certainly not about administration as a process of creating and determining action policies, but exclusively a way of performing tasks that does not allow making non-routine or routine decisions. Today, when practice shows that the first and middle line of management are disappearing, an important question arises - what replaces them? The first and middle decision lines are disappearing for a very simple reason. Simply, a certain process has been mastered

to a sufficient extent, so further activities can be standardized through administrative norms. This means that there is no need to make decisions because there are agreed norms on how the process runs.

Administration, as the first key aspect, includes routine administrative tasks that used to be the domain of middle management. This includes record keeping, document management, invoice processing, and similar tasks that often required manual labor and organizational coordination. Here we will return to Weber for a moment because we often hear the term “bureaucracy”.

Weber gave six 6 characteristics of bureaucracy, namely¹:

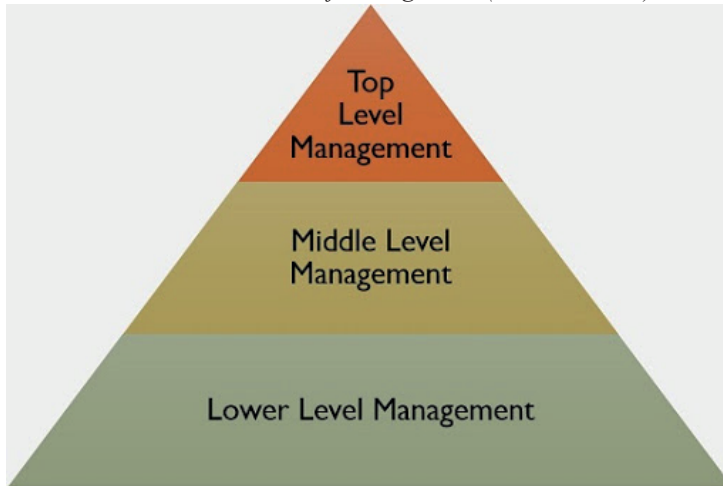
- a) Specialization of tasks or division of labor,
- b) Hierarchical management structure,
- c) Formal selection rules,
- d) Efficient and uniform requirements,
- e) Impersonal environment i
- f) Achievement-based advancement.

However, technological advances allow organizations to automate these tasks through software applications, resource management systems and other digital tools. This leads to a reduction in the need for middle management in traditional administrative management roles.

Another key aspect of this theory is the computerization of business processes. Computerization is discussed a lot in the rest of the book, but in order to make the reasons for the “infestation” of the administration towards the management clearer, here are a few more words. Computerization is about leads to the integration of information systems and technologies in all aspects of business. This enables organizations to exchange information, analyze data and make decisions more quickly and efficiently. For middle management, this means that they are no longer key intermediaries in the flow of information between senior management and operational teams. Informatization enables direct access to information to senior management and operational teams of momentum records of information, which reduces the need for mediation by middle management in the transfer of information. Many theoreticians and practitioners are looking for an organization that could withstand the challenges of modern times (Rupčić, 2018).

¹ Weber believed that task specialization guarantees timely completion of work at the highest skill level where tasks are divided based on employee competencies. This is designed to maximize efficiency for the organization. Exceeding one's responsibilities, such as presenting new ideas and taking actions outside the scope of work, is frowned upon.

Illustration 1: *Levels of management (source:author)*



Source: Author

This change in the role of middle management brings many challenges, but also opportunities for organizations. On the one hand, reducing administrative tasks frees up middle management's time and resources, allowing them to focus on other key activities. For example, they can become leaders in team development, support and mentoring for lower levels in the organization. At the same time, administrators have significantly lower incomes than decision makers, which means significant savings for business organizations. If we add to that the additional benefits previously enjoyed by lower line managers, companies have a serious interest in automating numerous business processes and handing over things from the hands of lower line managers to the hands of the administration. At the same time, the degree of risk in the business process is reduced, while at the same time the responsibility of the employees is changed.

On the other hand, lower line managers face the need to acquire additional skills in order to impose themselves as important in the business process as relevant. Therefore, this theory encourages middle management to constantly train and strengthen the ability to quickly adapt to changes in the business environment. Training and development become key factors for the success of middle management in this context. We are now realizing that business organizations must invest in training and support programs to help their managers develop new skills and recognize their value in changed roles. Why do we say they "must"? There are few business organizations that, as needed, can mobilize new

energy from the global workforce market, and if companies do not invest in the middle line of management, there is a real danger that in the future they will not even have adequate managerial top structures. This change in the role of the middle line of management can cause uncertainty and a phase of stagnation if the middle line of management does not consider new ways of “investing in themselves” which is at the same time a contribution to the organization. At the same time, today’s concept of career advancement sees managers as a multitude of individuals, there is no synergy or empathy among them because everyone sees only themselves. Employee motivation, attitudes towards negative events at the workplace, such as various forms of harassment (Williams, 2012), and overall job satisfaction become of primary importance (Čekrljica and Grujić, 2023).

THE ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT MAKE MISTAKES

It often happens that individuals do not do a certain job without “considering the job completed” because, for example, instead of determining the actual stock level, they specified some of the quantities that are usual for a certain commodity in a certain period. Although this activity appears to be harmless, it is possible for it to produce unexpected consequences. Employees often give expected and acceptable answers while at the same time work tasks suffer because they are not completed. In the reports, “everything is fine”, but in practice certain deviations are felt. Precisely in order to suppress such practice, the space for decision-making is maximally narrowed and administrative actions eliminate the space for inaccurate presentation of data and the final result. This is designed to maximize efficiency for the organization. Exceeding one’s responsibilities, such as presenting new ideas outside the scope of one department, is not approved (Proroković, 2009).

We prove this statement on a simple example. The so-called Miločer crossword puzzle is a good test for the efficiency of the administration over free decision-making and the way the task works. I chose the name “Miločer crossword puzzle” because I worked on this game for several years with students of the Faculty of Tourism in Miločer, Montenegro. Namely, letters and numbers are written randomly in 14 lines on A4 paper, and the students have the task of determining how many times the Latin letter “S” appears in the text. In order for the test to be successful, it is desirable that at least 15 students participate.

At the beginning, students are given the task to count the number of times the letter “S” appears in the text without using a pencil and without following the text with a pencil or finger and to write the number obtained. Generally, among 15 and more of them, the obtained results differ, mostly by 2 or 3 letters “S”, while in individuals there is a greater deviation from each other. After that, they have the task of counting again how many times this letter appears in the text, with the possibility of following the text with their finger. Also, they should write down the breastfeeding number. The results still differ from each other, but with smaller ranges compared to the first count. In the following counting, the student can use a pencil and can circle every letter “S” they see in the text. And in this case, if we have more than 15 participants, the results are not identical. Therefore, we did not complete the very simple task even on the third attempt because you did not get the same number. The fourth step is to add all the circled letters “S” in one line and to write the sum of the letters in one line at the end of that line. And then one of the students will get a different number. Finally, everyone reaches the same number if one student says out loud how many times the letter “S” is written in which row and the others check and confirm. At the same time, part of the students, one or two of them at least fifteen, do not actively participate in the game, but when asked how many times they have colored the letter “S”, they give the answer identical to their predecessor or an approximate number. They actually give the socially desirable response, that is, the response that is expected of them, but they do not participate in the activities that lead to the response. This is an essential problem in companies, because part of the employees who did not and do not perform certain activities in their reports indicate a parameter showing that the activities were performed. This example just shows that individuals would approach this task differently, but mistakes would occur and the result would not be correct, and as such it is very harmful in the role of input. By determining the exact rule in which the activity will be carried out with the elimination of the risk of error, we have in fact eliminated the decision-making factor and introduced an administrative form through which we arrive at an accurate and usable result.

Illustration 2. Miločerska ukrštenica

HFZ47ZSHEKDIEODLSLAJABSEJDSUDNJKSFOLRŠSRĐFŽDMCKSA
VDGFAFBHSUETASHDLFOVMBLGČHPT0ČGŽ367A4512SGDZEBBCVD
GKGOTLPGGČŽHVČFMDKSTAVRECAHSZSTERSSACETESVRJBOP
ROGŠFODFNDOŠ.Ł37LFKDLOPFNFLROHDZEVSLOEFA1QS,YLAKA
OPEKSJ512SGDZSEBCVDGKGOTSLGPOLKSSJEZ367SHDSKSEIFLSF
EPE0346AGAJKEUERIFLCNXMY4NKSODZUEUIVAN1WŠPH74LFJNC
MODKRMNNDJFUTДХЕКАИЇН.ЇНАОЕХСГ3У73ПОО.ЇТОСП29LF
OVMBLGČHPTFBHUETASHDLFOVMBLGČHGHTPT0ČGŽ367A4512SG
DZEBBCVDGKGOTLPGGČSSSSSSSZVČFMDKSTAVRSECAHSZSTERS
SACETEVRJBOPROGŠFODFNDO37LFKDLOPFNFLRSOHDZEVSLOE
FA1Q,YLODZUEUIVAN1WŠP74LFJNCMODKSRMNNDJFUTДСХЕКАС
ИЇН.ЇНАОЕХСГ3У73ПОО.ЇТОСП29LFОВМВЛГЧХПТФБХУЕТАС
HDLFOVMBLGČHPT0ČGŽ367ASZSTERFJNCMOSDKRJ512SGDSZES
FDCSSSEFLTIG9DČDJIESČFPFKGR34H7VRECAHSZSTESREDEWQŽ

Source: Author

THE ESSENCE OF THE THEORY ON THE LOSS OF THE FIRST AND MIDDLE LINE OF MANAGEMENT

In essence, the theory of losing the battle of the first and significant part of the middle line of management emphasizes that organizations must carefully manage the changes caused by administration and computerization to ensure that the middle line of decision-making, that is, the middle line of management, continues to contribute value to the organization, even though traditional roles are transformed. This theory represents a complex conceptual framework that analyzes changes in organizational structure and the role of middle management in modern companies. The main focus of the theory is on the transformation of the role of middle management due to the accelerated development of

technology and the wider application of information systems (Greiner 1972). Traditionally, middle management plays a key role in maintaining the operational efficiency of the organization and coordinating between top management and operational teams. However, with the increasing computerization of business processes and the automation of routine tasks, the first and significant part of middle management is becoming redundant for some of its previous responsibilities. Computerization of business processes brings efficiency and precision to work tasks, while administrative tasks become less dependent on the human factor. This reduces the need not only for the first but also for the middle line of management in the context of traditional administration management. Digitization of business processes allows employees to directly access information about their salaries, benefits and seniority through company information systems. Also, automating processes such as vacation application or requests for days off reduces the need for manual interventions by middle management. For example, in the past, a manager managing human resources in a company would have to take the time to display and approve employee vacation requests, previously manually and now via a computer database. However, with the help of software solutions, employees often enter this information into the system themselves and can monitor their vacation without the intervention of middle management. Also, performance evaluation software can automate the feedback and goal setting processes, reducing the need for manual evaluation by middle management. The application of IT solutions has several implications for the role of middle line management in HR. Man without technique and technology cannot do much, and technique and technology without man cannot do anything. (Kulić, 2004). Modern technology and information technologies help in many fields in modern business:

- a) Reduction of administrative tasks, which means that the middle line of management HR management spends less time on administrative tasks such as paper processing and record keeping. Instead, they can focus more on the strategic aspects of employee management.
- b) Greater focus on employee development because, given the automation of administration, the middle line of decision-making can pay more attention to employee development, mentoring and training programs to improve performance and team development.
- c) The analysis of employee data is simpler, the career tracking program enables better analysis of employee data. Midline can use this data to identify patterns in employee performance.

- d) Strategic planning of the workforce because with easier access to employee data, the middle line has access to quality and better strategic planning of the workforce, including recruitment and talent development in accordance with the needs of the organization.

Although this serves as an example where the administration through the application of information technology significantly influenced the reduction of the role of the middle line of management decision-making in business processes, it is important to note that such changes differ from organization to organization. Some sectors and organizations will feel a greater impact than others depending on specific needs and technological advances. A good example is the collection of important information about passengers flying with one of the airlines. In the past, on international flights an airline often had a middle manager known as a “purser” who was responsible for managing cabin crew and ensuring that in-flight processes ran smoothly. A purser was usually an experienced steward or stewardess with additional responsibilities and a higher salary. However, with the development of advanced information systems, communication technologies and automation, the role of purser has become less necessary on many international flights. Information about passengers, specific requests, medical situations and other important information is now often available electronically to flight personnel. Automated systems allow flight attendants to communicate effectively with the cockpit and ground base. This has led to a reduction in the need for a purser on international flights. The middle line of decision-making in the purser’s view is no longer necessary because all cabin crew members have data during the flight as tasks have become automated and made available through digital systems.

CONCLUSION

The transformation in management and human resources management continues in order to better respond to new challenges and opportunities. This primarily means further digital transformation. Technology and digitization are expected to continue to shape management. Artificial intelligence, process automation, data analytics and blockchain technology will become even more important tools for effective management and decision-making. The organization will increasingly emphasize the ability to quickly adapt to change and innovation. An agile approach will become the standard, enabling a quick reaction to market changes. Increased

attention will be paid to diversity and inclusiveness in organizations. Bringing in different perspectives and skills will become a priority in order to achieve a higher level of creativity and better solutions. It is certain that under the pressure of the legislator, organizations will increasingly commit to sustainable practices and socially responsible business. Acquiring new skills and constant learning will be key for employees. Talent management will focus on skill development and training to support employees in their professional development. Leaders are expected to become even more oriented towards collaboration, communication and inspiration. Emotional intelligence skills and the ability to lead diverse teams will become essential. Organizations will experiment with new structure models to adapt their operations to a faster environment. These are, of course, our assumptions that can be expected in future management and human resources. A comprehensive approach, flexibility and quick adaptation to changes will be key to the success of the organization in the future.

TRANSFORMACIJE LINIJA ODLUČIVANJA U SAVREMENOM MENADŽMENTU - INFORMATIZACIJA ODLUČIVANJA

Saša Čekrlija

Abstract: U današnjem poslovnom okruženju, menadžment se suočava s ključnim izazovima transformacije zbog globalizacije i digitalizacije. U cilju održavanja konkurentске prednosti, organizacije su sve više orijentirane na agilno upravljanje, što podrazumijeva fleksibilne strukture odlučivanja i brzo prilagođavanje promjenama. Ključne komponente ovog procesa uključuju kontinuiranu edukaciju i razvoj menadžera kako bi se osigurala njihova sposobnost da efikasno vode timove u dinamičnom okruženju. To zahtijeva primjenu naprednih tehnika upravljanja projektima, korištenje poslovne inteligencije za donošenje odluka i fokus na razvoju softverskih alata za podršku upravljačkim procesima. Sve u svemu, menadžment u savremenom kontekstu zahtijeva brzu prilagodljivost i kontinuirano učenje kako bi se ostvarila uspješna konkurencija na globalnom tržištu. Digitalna transformacija, kroz implementaciju naprednih tehnologija kao što su umjetna inteligencija, automatizacija i analiza podataka, također postaje ključ za postizanje efikasnosti i inovacija u upravljanju. To omogućava bolje razumijevanje potreba tržišta i optimizaciju internih procesa. Tehnološki napredak i kompjuterizacija poslovnih procesa doveli su do smanjenja administrativnih zadataka i potrebe za

tradicionalnim upravljanjem na nižim nivoima. Prva i srednja linija menadžmenta postepeno nestaju jer su administracija i informacijski sistemi preuzeli većinu rutinskih zadataka. Ovo stavlja pritisak na srednji menadžment da se prilagodi i razvije nove vještine kako bi ostao relevantan. Obuka i podrška srednjem menadžmentu postaju ključni za uspješno suočavanje s ovim izazovima. Organizacije moraju ulagati u svoje menadžere kako bi ih obučile za nove uloge u promijenjenim strukturama odlučivanja. Iako ove promjene uzrokuju neizvjesnost, one također otvaraju mogućnosti menadžmentu da se razvije i doprinese inovativnosti i uspjehu organizacija. Što se tiče daljeg razvoja, očekuje se da će tehnologija, agilnost, inkluzivnost i održivost biti ključni faktori u upravljanju budućnosti.

Keywords: transformacija, srednja linija odlučivanja, administracija, informacijske tehnologije

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