

## BOOK REVIEW

**Tolochek V.A. (2020/2021). Labor Psychology & Technologies of professional selection. M.: Publishing house “Institute of Psychology RAS”**

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**Abstract.** The review analyzes the content of two textbooks by V.A. Tolochek “Labor Psychology” and “Technologies of professional selection”. The structure of the books and the content of the material presented by Russian and foreign authors are compared. The features of the reviewed textbooks by V.A. Tolochek solving the problems of the actual future, on the psychological support of the subject throughout his life.

**Key words:** labor psychology, professional selection, methodology, subject, tasks, technologies, human resource management.

In 2021, the next reprints of two books by V.A. Tolochek were published. In view of the fact that they reprinted six times – “Labor Psychology” [17; 18; 19; 20; 21; 22] and four times “Technologies of professional selection” [22; 23; 24; 25], their publication is a reason to pay attention to them and consider them as the “focus” of a number of disciplinary problems.

We single out two reasons: 1) Initially, in the 1970s, when psychology as a discipline was still at the stage of its formation, more precisely, when it was being restored after the memorable decree of 1936, it was extremely difficult to collect and combine in one book the rather meager material of domestic scientific research. practical work and the then still inaccessible experience of foreign scientists (not counting the stage of openness of science at the beginning of the 20th century). 2) Later, at the turn of the XX-XXI the subject area of the discipline began to expand dramatically (covering new areas of human activity, new scientific and practical problems, borrowing the concepts of related sciences), which also makes it difficult to review and cover them in one book by one author. So, in

the 1970s-1980s, only recognized authoritative scientists undertook the experience of writing a textbook [5; 11]. And if in other disciplinary areas of psychology we find a lot of author's concepts and experiences of writing textbooks (on general psychology, personality psychology, psychophysiology, developmental, social psychology, organizational, etc.), then in relation to the labor psychology, a similar presentation of many concepts by Russian scientists and options there are almost no textbooks, which can and should also become a separate topic of serious discussion.

But even in the 1990s-2000s, one can speak mainly about the books of scientific groups of some leading universities [6; 13; etc.], about a more active specialization of scientists in certain areas of labor psychology and their presentation of individual fragments of the discipline [1; 3; 4; 7; 8; 10; 12; 15; 27; 28; etc.], than about their desire to integrate scientific knowledge and reduce it to some “invariants”, to a generally recognized factual basis, on the one hand, integrating the achievements of the discipline for about a century and a half, on the other hand,

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reflecting the scientific positions of Russian and foreign specialists.

It can be assumed that Russian scientists have “problems” both in relation to the tasks of the first part, and in relation to the second. This is indirectly evidenced by the volume of textbooks, rarely reaching 200-300 pages. Accordingly, many important issues (professional selection, labor motivation, certification, etc.) are covered extremely sparingly, others are simply not considered (career management, human resource management, retraining and etc.). This can be partly explained by the fact that a number of important issues of managing the activities and behavior of an employee in Russian textbooks are “assigned” to another discipline – the psychology of organizational development, which, nevertheless, does not remove the need for a holistic coverage of the main aspects of the activities, behavior and life of a person conducted by him. in labor processes and within the walls of an enterprise, organization.

The extremely uneven history of the development of Russian psychology, incl. Labor psychology (psychotechnics), during the XX century is indeed a serious factor hindering a holistic coverage of disciplinary problems. The accelerating historical evolution of social societies and the organization of social production at the turn of two centuries also act as a very serious circumstance that makes it difficult to conduct a proper analysis of scientific and scientific-practical experience.

Comparing the approaches of Russian authors [5; 10; 11; 13] and foreign authors of textbooks [2; 9; 14; etc.], we note that foreign scientists are approximately equally successful and regularly act both as mono-authors and co-authors; the volume of their books is much larger (about 40.0-45.0 pp), which makes it possible to reveal each section in more detail, provide extensive illustrations with examples, tables, and graphs; The scope of the topics discussed is usually wide and includes an analysis of both the typical features of the internal environment of the organization and the external environment, issues of performance evaluation and human resource management. Textbooks by foreign authors, as a rule, include detailed descriptions of methods for studying the activity and personality of an employee, assessing his work, issues of his retraining and professional health, design of tasks and jobs, typical work modes, and many others. [2; 9; 14].

Against the background of the extremely modest experience of writing Russian textbooks, let's consider two of them. As a rule, when writing textbooks, authors are guided by their own work and the results of research by their closest colleagues, representatives of one scientific school. In this regard, the characteristic features of the books under review by V.A. Tolochek and, probably, explaining their “viability”, a wider panorama of coverage of the subject, tasks, scientific approaches; critical analysis; designation of the contours of development prospects, etc.

The logic of the presentation of the material and the composition of the textbook “Labor Psychology” [17-22] is as follows. The first chapter presents the main contours of the scientific discipline, taking into account the traditions and positions of reputable scientists. It reflects the current state of labor psychology. The main attention is paid to its object and subject, the content of the concepts of “labor” and “activity”.

The second part is devoted to the history of the discipline and is intended to reflect the dynamism of its development. This dynamic is presented in two ways: a) chronologically, as the history of the development of science through facts, events, tasks, names, dates; c) structurally – as processes of its constant differentiation and integration. Attention is paid to the main factors in the development of science. The third chapter examines the components of labor psychology in the broad sense of the word – as a “complex of sciences about labor and man as a subject of labor”: labor psychology (in the narrow sense), engineering psychology, ergonomics, organizational psychology, career guidance, vocational training.

In the fourth chapter – the basic concepts of discipline and its main “units” are discussed – a profession, a labor post, a workplace, their relationship and characteristics. The fifth chapter is devoted to the “macrostructure” of the discipline – an extended discussion of its object and subject. The sixth – presents the methodology and methods of research, experiment, expertise. The main attention is paid to the tactics and strategy of the psychologist as a person who ensures the meeting of science and practice, a specialist who organizes their effective interaction. The seventh chapter discusses working conditions, efficiency, success factors of the subject, their determinants.

In the eighth – the issues of adaptation of a person to professional activity, his formation as a professional are discussed – conditions, factors, psychophysiological “price”, levels and specific mechanisms, “units” of adaptation; the possibility of labor psychology going beyond the traditional “scale” of its conceptual apparatus. The ninth chapter analyzes the issues of professiography and professionalism of the subject, the criteria for understanding the professional suitability of a person and the contexts of its assessment in a historical perspective. Chapter ten is devoted to the pole of the “subject” a person as an active subject of his life, a description of the processes of his formation as a subject of activity.

In the eleventh – questions of a professional career, age dynamics of the evolution of a person as an individual, subject, personality are considered. The twelfth section discusses the relationship between scientific and applied problems, the features of socio-psychological technologies on the example of professional selection of candidates (taking into account the characteristics of activities in socionomic professions, activities in the systems “human-technology”, “man-artistic image”, “man-sign”, “man-nature”).

Chapter thirteen discusses the issues of selection, selection, professional training and retraining, certification of personnel: principles, methods and technologies. Attention is focused on the historical shift in the logic of working with people – from “personnel accounting” to “human resource management”. Chapter fourteen reveals the features of the development of labor psychology as a discipline in the present historical conditions, the features of the search and description by scientists of new essential properties of phenomena included in the subject of labor psychology, historical changes in the configuration of the discipline, its actual tasks.

The second textbook (in the first three editions “Psychological support of professional activity. Methods of professional selection”, in the fourth “Technologies of professional selection”), according to the title, is focused on covering a few individual topics of the discipline. Notable features of this book: 1) The author sees the key, defining questions in covering the selection problem not as methods and technologies, but as the answers of the psychologist “Why?”, “For what?” should carry out psychodiagnostics in a given organization at a given stage of its evolution, in its given relations with the surrounding social reality.

That is, highlighting as the main non-typical questions “How?”, and above all, understanding the tasks of leadership in a larger social and chronological context than administrators, managers, and practitioners do. 2) Implementation of the evolutionary approach (the problem of selection is considered in its historical development and its understanding by the customer and contractor, in the development of each specific organization).

Let's name the main topics of the textbook “Technologies of professional selection” [26]: Introduction (in which the subject and objectives of the course are highlighted, the scientific position of the author is disclosed). Chapter 1. Psychological support of professional activity: current and future tasks (including six sections and practical tasks): 1.1. Professional self-determination of the subject. 1.2. Professional selection of personnel and professional training of personnel. 1.3. Adaptation of personnel in the organization and career management. 1.4. Human resource management: motivation, evaluation, certification. 1.5. Professional health and professional longevity. 1.6. The environment of the organization, interactions and organizational behavior of employees. Practical tasks.

Chapter 2. Status of methods and techniques in the system of means for solving scientific and practical problems (includes seven sections and practical tasks): 2.1. Research methods in the structure of the means of scientific knowledge and practical activities. 2.2. Methods of psychological research. 2.3. Methods and measuring scales. 2.4. Projective methods. 2.5. Rank methods. 2.6. Interval scales and standard test questionnaires. 2.7. Multifactorial psychological tests. Practical tasks.

Chapter 3. The structure of the personality and the possibility of predicting the professional success of the subject (includes five sections and practical tasks): 3.1. Personal psychological characteristics. 3.2. Personality and subject in domestic psychology. 3.3. Hierarchical structure of personality. 3.4. The subject's activity in the continuum “inclinations-competencies”. 3.4. Data of psychodiagnostics and self-realization of a person in the profession. 3.5. Profession, specialization, workplace: historical trends of change. Practical tasks.

Chapter 4. “Personality” (“man”, “individual”): scientific concepts, manifestations of personality and its reflection in psychological methods (four sections and practical tasks): 4.1.

Test questionnaire G. Eysenck: structure and types of temperament. 4.2. R. B. Cattell's test questionnaire: the concept of personality and the content characteristics of factors. 4.3. Level of subjective control: domestic modification of the methodology. 4.4. Strategies of behavior in conflict: actions and personality traits. Practical tasks.

Chapter 5. Professional suitability: a phenomenon, its evolution and evaluation possibilities (six sections and practical tasks): 5.1. Professional suitability as a phenomenon. 5.2. Methods for assessing the professional potential of labor subjects: opportunities and limitations. 5.3. Professionally important qualities and professional activity of the subject. 5.4. Professionally important qualities: positive, negative, factors and determinants. 5.5. Profession, specialization, workplace: historical trends of change. 5.6. PIQ-approach and competency-based approach: opportunities, limitations, additionality. Practical tasks.

Chapter 6. Psychological methods and diagnostics (five sections and practical tasks): 6.1. Psychodiagnostics: a variety of methods and prospects for its expansion of their development, the possibility of their construction. 6.2. Psychodiagnostics: possibilities and limitations. 6.3. Psychometric requirements for measurement instruments. 6.4. Model practice of professional selection: instrumental efficiency and social effects. 6.5. The potential of domain-specific methods. Practical tasks.

Chapter 7. The practice of using psychological techniques in professional selection (five sections and practical tasks): 7.1. Classical methods: practice of use. 7.2. Heuristic potential of special techniques. 7.3. Heuristic potential of piloting techniques. 7.4. Combinations of research methods in solving problems of human resource management. 7.5. Computer diagnostics: opportunities and limitations. Practical tasks.

Chapter 8. Joint activity: factors, conditions, requirements of activity, organizational culture and self-organization of subjects (five sections and practical tasks): 8.1. Subjective success factors. 8.2. Asymmetry of partners' PVK preferences. 8.3. Effects of the distribution of control functions. 8.4. Styles of business communication, the evolution of subjects and organizations. 8.5. The phenomenon of "psychological niche". Practical tasks.

In the final part of the textbook, typical

blocks are presented: Conclusion. Applications (containing tables, reference material, etc.). List of used literature.

It follows from the structure of the content of the textbook [26] that it covers a wider range of important and related issues than Russian authors usually do. The novelty of the presentation of theoretical and empirical material can be said as follows. The author of the book structurally and meaningfully integrates the main issues of related training courses ("Psychological support of professional activity", "Psychology of organizational development", "Labor psychology"): the central theme of professional selection is considered in the context of a person's professional development throughout his working life, factors of maintaining professional health and longevity, the role and possibilities of psychological support of the subject and management of its development, factors of interaction between people in individual and joint activities, in different organizational cultures, at different stages of the evolution of the organization, etc.

The book presents a critical analysis of the traditional understanding of the tasks of professional selection. These tasks have been set and relatively successfully solved since the beginning of the 20th century. Over the course of more than a century, a lot has changed (the organization and technologies of labor, the understanding and attitude of employers and scientists to the "working person", the methods and methodology for solving selection problems, the people themselves – their preparedness and education, motives and meanings of work, etc.). Empirical material is also presented, reflecting the dynamics of changes in the state of the external and internal environment of the organization, which affects both the "norms" of selection and the content of work with personnel. A number of empirical data, summarized in tables, illustrate both the inevitable changes over time in the personal and professionally important qualities of the employees of each organization, and the extent of these changes; the direction of such changes also acts as a predictor of the future of the company – its future transitions to typical stations of "life cycles".

At the end of the presentation, as a rule, the current practice is critically examined and a new understanding of the tasks of human resource management is proposed. Along with the coverage of typical technologies, issues of



relations between the organization and its social environment (the socio-economic state of the region, national tasks, etc.) are discussed. The conditions conducive to increasing the success of solving the problems of professional selection are discussed; examples of the organization of activities that allow more successful management of the company's human resources are given. The effects and resources of interaction between the subjects of joint activity are considered (by the way, a topic that has not yet been considered in the coverage of this training course, even theoretically, is still insufficiently and slowly developed).

The author distinguishes diagnostic tasks: strategic, tactical, operational, situational, for the solution of which it is proposed to use three types of techniques ("classical", "special", "pilot"). In view of the fact that the activity of a practicing psychologist is not limited to office work, but includes many different tasks; in view of the fact that they must not only solve "ripe issues" posed by administrators, but also conduct constant monitoring of the organizational stage and its personnel, the psychologist cannot be limited to using exclusively "classical" methods, by the way, in their use in real practice, those many limitations, but must be able to quickly develop and skillfully combine in their work "special" methods that integrate the characteristics of the activities and personalities of representatives of a given company at a given stage of its life cycle, as well as "pilot", not complex, but allowing you to quickly and regularly carry out diagnostics of relations in working groups, etc. Accordingly, the issues of using psychological methods in the environment of real organizations are discussed. People of mature age, who have a certain social status, a rich experience of entering a job and being fired, behave differently than schoolchildren and students, based on the experience of working with whom methods and recommendations for their use are often developed.

The textbook argues for the need to create data banks, the formation of "personnel logistics" (i.e., it is noted that a psychologist must not only solve problems, focusing on the "cut" data, but also analyze the history of the company, predict its evolution prospects). Options for the development of the theory and practice of psychodiagnostics are proposed (transition to the tasks of selection not for a profession, but for a specific workplace; an interpretation of "selection" as a "selection" and

subsequent distribution of people to appropriate jobs; selection to complement the qualities of already working employees companies with the qualities of newcomers, ensuring the integration of personal and professionally important qualities of all interacting subjects of joint activity; transition from the paradigm of assessing the actual qualities of the subject to the paradigm of updating the resources of the subjects of joint activity, etc.).

How fundamentally important are the tasks of human conservation; active management of the interactions of subjects in micro- and small social groups (these issues, at best, act as separate in different disciplines, while in the real environment of real organizations they are closely "intertwined"); the issues of transition from retrospective psychodiagnostics (based on past experience) to projective, prospective diagnostics (from classical to modern psychodiagnostics) are discussed.

The two peer-reviewed books "Labor Psychology" and "Professional Selection Technologies" seem to complement each other, reveal similar topics at different scales of historical time, discipline, organization (working group, company, industrial enterprise). If, for example, the issues of professional selection are separate, private, along with others, considered on the scale of labor psychology, then when they are considered key, central, main, one can see how this "part" is associated with the "whole", as in particular and in particular, the general is manifested, how the success of solving one personnel task contributes to the success of human resource management as a whole.

In comparison with other Russian and foreign analogues, in both peer-reviewed textbooks, several "copyrights" are distinguished: socio-psychological and social phenomena generated by this historical time. 2) Consideration of individual tasks of human resource management as interrelated, as defining each other. 3) Presentation of different topics of the course (career guidance, selection, certification, etc.) as components of a single process of the subject's professional development. 4) Methodological reflection (covering all the basic topics not only in terms of their factography and methodological solutions, which distinguishes many textbooks, but also in terms of analyzing the scientific approach to understanding and explicating each scientific and scientific-practical problem); reflection, organically included in the subject and organization of research (each chapter of the "Psychology of Labor" ends with a section -

"Paradigms"). 5) An evolutionary approach to highlighting the content of the training course (presenting not only the content of the issue under study, not only the main approaches to solving it, but also the historical changes in the discipline itself, manifested both in the expansion of its subject, the increase in the tasks being solved, and in their periodic reinterpretation). By the way, the evolutionary view of the subject and tasks of the discipline was already stated in the first version of the textbook [16]. 6) Periodic revisions and additions (sections, list of references, tables). 7) Wide inclusion of works of domestic researchers, carried out at the turn of the XX-XXI century (i.e., chronologically the latest, integrated into the history of the study of the issue). 8) An extensive list of literary sources, serving as a separate important component of the textbook, allowing the thoughtful reader to better navigate the sea of scientific and scientific-methodical literature.

At the end of article, we note that abstracts to both books that are addressed to university students, graduate students and teachers, employees of personnel departments and personnel development departments of state and commercial organizations. Judging by the number of references in the RIC, these books are really read and found something important not only by students, but also by graduate students, teachers, practicing psychologists, authors of scientific and scientific-practical publications.

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