

## **Theme 2.2. Business game as a method of learning**

The business game has emerged as a tool for finding management decisions in the face of uncertainty and multifactoriality.

Nowadays, business play is used in the educational process of universities, as a pedagogical technology, or one of the methods of interactive learning, during social and psychological trainings and at work to solve industrial, social and psychological problems.

In all cases, there is a "two-sided business game" and not only game or professional tasks are solved, but at the same time participants are trained and educated.

Business play is a didactic tool for the development of (theoretical and practical) professional thinking, which is expressed in the ability to analyze production situations, setting, solving and justifying subjectively new professional tasks for students.

A specific feature and advantage of the business game as a method of learning is the activation of group processes by means of directed modeling of functional-role relations of real activity. The business games method is a specially organized activity for the implementation of theoretical knowledge.

### ***The main elements of business games:***

1. The game simulates one or another aspect of purposeful human activity.
2. Participants in the game are given roles that determine the difference between their interests and incentives in the game.
3. Game actions are governed by a system of rules.
4. The business game embodies the space-time characteristics of the simulated activity.
5. The game is conditional.

6. The game control circuit consists of the following blocks: conceptual, scripted, staged, stage, block of criticism and reflection, refereeing, block of providing information.

***Characteristic features of a business game are:***

Modeling of the work process (activity) of managers and specialists of enterprises and organizations in the development of management decisions.

- Implementation of the “chain of decisions” process. Because a business game is considered a simulated system as a dynamic game, it means that the game is not limited to solving a single problem, but requires a "chain of decisions."

The decision made by the participants of the game in the first stage influences the model and changes its initial state. The change of state enters the game complex, and based on the information received, game participants make decisions in the second stage of the game, etc.

- Allocation of roles among participants in the game.
- Difference of role goals in making decisions that contribute to conflicts between participants, conflicts of interest.
- The presence of controlled emotional stress.
- Interaction of participants who fulfill different roles.
- Existence of a common game purpose in the whole game team.
- Collective decision-making by game participants.
- Multiple alternative solutions.
- Availability of a system of individual or group assessment of the activity of the participants of the game.

**Business Games Classification:**

***1. By the time of holding:***

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—Without time restriction;

—With a time limit;

—Games that take place in real time;

—Games where time is short.

*2. According to activity evaluation:*

- a point or other evaluation of the activity of a player or team;

- an assessment of who and how worked, who is absent.

*3. By the end result:*

• hard games - a known answer in advance (such as a network schedule), there are hard rules;

• Free, open games - there is no known answer, rules are set for each game, participants work to solve an unstructured task.

*4. Purpose:*

- instructive, aimed at acquiring new knowledge and consolidating the skills of participants;

- stating, competitions of professional skill;

- search engines aimed at identifying problems and finding ways to solve them.

Organization of a business game includes: preparation, conduct of the game, analysis of the game and its results. When selecting material for business games, you must comply with the following requirements:

- the material should be relevant, typical and real, that is, reflect events that take place in real life;

- situations should be problematic, interesting, only in this case they will cause discussions;

- the material underlying the situation must be scientific in nature.

There are many names and varieties of business games that may differ in their methodology and goals:

- didactic and management games,
- role-playing,
- problem-oriented games.

Application of business games allows to identify and trace the peculiarities of participants' psychology. They can be used to determine:

- having tactical and / or strategic thinking;
- speed of adaptation in new conditions (including extreme conditions);
- ability to analyze their own capabilities and build appropriate behavior;
- ability to predict the development of processes;
- the ability to analyze other people's abilities and motivations and influence their behavior.

The business game helps to solve complex problems by applying special rules of discussion, stimulating the creative activity of students, either by means of special methods of work (for example, by the method of "brainstorming"), and by means of moderation, which provide productive communication.

It allows you to generate solutions to many problems and to identify ways to develop the organization, to launch a mechanism for achieving strategic goals.

*Structure of a business game.* According to the idea of the overall structure of online learning methods, a key, central element is the imitation model of the object, since it is the only one that enables the implementation of the chain of decisions. As a model can act as an organization, professional activity, set of laws or physical phenomena, etc. In combination with the environment (the external environment of

the simulation model), the imitation model forms the problematic content of the game.

The actors in the game are students who organize themselves into teams and perform individual or team roles. At the same time, both the model and the actors are in the game environment, which is a professional, social or social context imitated in the game professionals.

The system of action of participants on the simulation model in the process of their interaction can be considered as a model of management. All game activity takes place against the background and according to the didactic model of the game, which includes such elements as the game model of activity, the system of evaluation, actions of the game engineer and all that ensures achievement of the educational goals of the game.

*The scenario of a business game often looks like this:*

In the introductory speech, the participants of the game are given tasks, the leaders and organizers of the game are presented, its program is announced.

The participants of the game are given the setting: to overcome the psychological inertia of thinking, to destroy the traditional scheme of views and ideas and, at least for a while, to break away from the traditional conditions, constant stereotypes of thinking.

After the introductory mini-lecture there is a simple introductory role-playing game.

Its purpose is to activate the participants of the game, to stimulate their creative forces, to bring closer to each other, if they have not had to work in such a composition before, to create an atmosphere of benevolence and trust, on the one hand, rivalry and creative discussion - on the other.

Then all participants are arbitrarily divided into several equal groups that will work on the problem. Each nominates a candidate who prepares and delivers a keynote speech.

The debate results in a vote. The role-playing game takes place at a fast pace, developing the improvisational thinking of the players.

After that, the levels of the number of groups formed in advance are removed each to their premises to conduct a brainstorming on one of the problems. Each of these groups has a methodologist whose task is to skillfully organize the process.

The work of the search team for each new brainstorming begins with the choice of a leader for the problem, who should organize the work of the group, prepare a report to the conference and in competition to defend the chosen program of action.

Simultaneously with the leader is selected opponent, his task - to evaluate the program of a related group.

The teacher helps the head of the search team to organize teamwork, to make suggestions.

The teacher must ensure that a new search team leader and a new opponent are selected for each problem, thus maximizing the activity of all participants in the game. When it comes to choosing a leader, it is very important to be democratic.

After completing the independent work, the search team defends their project at a general conference. The following are usually required of reports:

1. Provide a brief analysis of the problem.
2. Justify the proposals made.
3. To prove the practical significance of the proposals and the possibility of their implementation.

In a problem-oriented business game, all levels, administrative positions for the period of the game are "liquidated", no one should enjoy any advantage. Any ideas can be expressed, but criticism of the participants is absolutely unacceptable during the game.

On this basis, relationships are gradually formed, bringing together different views, thoughts, experiences and allowing us to produce something in common. This technology allows us to deeply delve into the problem, to ensure mutual understanding between people and to achieve unity of social action, capable of changing the situation, overcoming the crisis or creating a fundamentally new solution to the actual problem.

Leaders at conferences usually hand over the record of their speeches to business executives. Opponents from each group also submit their records. Video of all business game conferences is also being recorded. Thus, questions, answers and discussion points are recorded. Game managers, members of the expert committee and methodologists also keep records. Based on the materials collected, a compatible report is prepared.

The organization of a business game is based on the following principles:

- the principle of simulation of specific conditions and dynamics of production. Modeling the real professional environment of a specialist in all the diversity of work, social and personal relationships is the basis of interactive learning methods;
- the principle of game modeling of content and forms of professional activity. The implementation of this principle is a prerequisite for the educational game, because it has educational functions;
- the principle of joint activity. In a business game, this principle requires implementation through the involvement of several participants in the cognitive activity. It requires the developer to select and characterize the roles, defining their authority, interests, and tools. At the same time the most characteristic types of professional interaction of "officials" are identified and modeled;
- the principle of dialogical communication. This principle lays down the necessary condition for the achievement of educational goals. Only dialogue, discussion with the maximum involvement of the players can produce truly creative work. Comprehensive collective discussion of educational material enables them to

achieve a comprehensive understanding of their professionally relevant processes and activities;

- the principle of two-sidedness. This principle reflects the process of development of the real personal characteristics of a specialist in "imaginary" game conditions. The developer sets before the student two kinds of goals that reflect the real and game contexts in the learning activity;

- the principle of problematic content of the simulation model and the process of its deployment in the game activity.

*Business game use goals:*

- ◆ formation of cognitive and professional motives and interests;

Ванья nurturing the systematic thinking of a specialist, which includes a comprehensive understanding not only of nature and society, but also of oneself, their place in the world;

- ◆ transfer of a holistic view of professional activity and its large fragments taking into account emotional and personal perception;

- ◆ teaching of collective mental and practical work, formation of skills of social interaction and communication, skills of individual and joint decision-making;

Ванья education of responsible attitude to the case, respect for social values and attitudes of the collective and society as a whole;

- ◆ training in modeling methods, in particular: mathematical, engineering and social design.

*The advantages of a business game are as follows.*

- 1) In the course of performing a business game, the participants do not just participate, as in normal exercise, they live this moment, they are emotionally involved in the activity, they perceive the game model realistically. In the process of



work increases cohesion, effective achievement of the result is impossible without the activity of all participants.

2) Training is joint, simultaneous, but purposeful.

3) Business play involves training in a single rhythm for all participants, but in addition to compatible, each performs its clearly defined role, which involves: work in a multifaceted mode, in team mode, in the mode of independent activity. These directions increase the influence on the participant and provide the maximum return from him.

4) Communication during the game is as close to real life as possible.

5) The business game is real for the participants at the time of its holding. At the time of the game, people see each other in roles, and as a consequence, interact with each other at the level of life relationships.

6) Individuality of the proposed game and increasing efficiency.

7) Business game increases efficiency in the case of its personalized development, which personalizes, because it returns people to the real conditions of their immediate activity, reveals possible problems. It is able to detect real conflict, complexities and moments of lengthy negotiation. This helps to identify facts that hinder further development, and to solve them or mark them out in the overall group analysis.

8) The integrity and duration of the game.

9) The integrity of the business game and consistency allows you to recreate the full range of relationships, opportunities and difficulties. Step by step, as you progress through the simulation, you create a complete picture.

Regardless of the typology, business games have a number of common points in organizing and building them. It is appropriate to consider a number of principles that will ensure the effectiveness of business games:

1. Representativeness and sufficiency of elements of the game situation. This means that the components or components of the game should have a sufficiently complete representation of the simulated situation in an aspect that is relevant to the objectives of the business game and contain information that enables them to understand the essence of the problem and make an adequate decision. When modeling a particular situation, it is necessary to reduce information about it, to select and display, mainly, only the factors and fragments of reality that are essential for decision making.

2. The modular nature of the game. The term "module" means a set of materials that has an applied meaning and consists of a theoretical part, a description of the situation (case), examples, illustrations, diagrams, questions, answers, methodological recommendations. The modular approach promotes deep, comprehensive and active assimilation of the material. In terms of the structure of a business game, there are usually several relatively simple modules, each of which is a set of elements that form organizational and / or functional unity, namely organizational function modules and stage modules. The modular structure of a business game allows you to work out its individual elements or fragments, depending on the learning goals, interests of participants and the rate of learning of the material by each student.

3. The systematic use of a business game, since a business game has the desired effect only when it relies on theoretical knowledge, a clear idea of the field of activity that it imitates, and is a logical continuation of the educational process, its transition into a practical behavioral stage.

Conducting a business game in the educational process allows to form a positive mood of the students, namely: interest in the educational activities and those problems that are modeled and played in the game process; assimilation of large amounts of information that contribute to the creative search for solutions to problems; formation of objective self-assessment of students; the ability to adequately analyze the real production situation; development of innovative, analytical, psychological and economic thinking.