

Evolution of anti-crisis management of the organization in modern conditions

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Abstract. The article deals with the dynamics of the theory of anti-crisis management of the organization (ACM) in modern conditions. The basic classifications of types of anti-crisis management are considered, their comparative analysis is carried out, conclusions are made that in modern conditions anti-crisis management of an organization is inseparably connected with its sustainable development, therefore, it comes to a new level, becoming a part of strategic management and especially actual today change management. The levels of anti-crisis management of the organization are marked out. The article pays special attention to the ambiguity of interpretation of the concept of «crisis of the organization». It is necessary for formation of effective anti-crisis strategy of the organization to understand the essence of its basic concept – crisis, the research of its genesis and modern interpretations. The study of economic literature has shown that the understanding of crisis is ambiguous. There are two main positions have been formed in studies on the problems of crisis management to understand the nature of the crisis. One group of authors (E.M. Korotkov, T.N. Rogova, V.K. Krutikov, K.V. Baldin, S.E. Kovan, etc.) focuses on the negative manifestations of the crisis, its destructive function. Other researchers (A.S. Bolshakov, V.Y. Zakharov, A.D. Chernyakhovsky, N.D. Koryagin, A.S. Lifshits, V.M. Pishchulov, etc.) consider crises as a contradictory phenomenon and analyse their positive sides and creative role. The dual nature of crises predetermines the multi-purpose orientation of ACS and multifunctionality of its content. This is the peculiarity of the anti-crisis management system. The unified ACM system includes tools for crisis prevention, diagnosis, overcoming the crisis, enterprise restructuring strategy, methods of crisis prevention, methods of forecasting and planning, strategic management, as well as non-standard methods of personnel management. The author notes that crisis management tools should be integral components of sustainable enterprise development strategies.

Keywords: crisis management; crisis theory; crisis of organization; organization life cycle theory; sustainable development of organization

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Introduction

In modern conditions of economic management of domestic enterprises, which are characterized by a high degree of uncertainty and increased aggressiveness of the external environment, cyclical occurrence of crisis phenomena, threats of globalization, integration transformations, the issues of crisis management are of particular importance, underestimation of the importance of which restrains the pace of enterprise development, and in extreme cases may lead to the termination of its activities. Ensuring the efficiency of functioning and sustainable development of any business entity is determined by its ability to respond in a timely manner to various crisis situations, the ability to choose rational alternatives of anti-crisis measures based on the maximum use of available potential.

It is necessary to understand the essence of its basic concept to form an effective anti-crisis strategy of the organization – crisis, the study of its genesis and modern interpretations. The study of economic literature has shown that the understanding of crisis is ambiguous.

The purpose of this paper is to show the dynamics of crisis management at the enterprise level, taking into account the dual understanding of the term “crisis” and the expansion of the areas of crisis management in enterprise management, as the relevance of these processes is rapidly growing in modern conditions.

The article analyzed the scientific works of the most significant specialists in crisis management,

studying this subject for many years. The following regularity is noted: two groups of authors emphasizing different sides of the concept of “crisis”: negative and positive.

Initially, the essence of economic crises was considered at the macroeconomic level in the framework of the theory of economic cycles, which was developed by economic scientists in the XIX-XX centuries, including K. Zhuglar, K. Marx, N.D. Kondratiev, J.M. Keynes, J. Schumpeter, D. Hicks and others. Researchers of the XIX century attributed the cause of medium-term (industrial) crises to periodically arising processes of overproduction of enterprises' products, to the shortage of demand, to the aggravation of the problem of sales of goods. K. Marx explained the crises by the aggravation of the contradiction between the public nature of production, i.e. the universal interrelation of macroeconomic processes, and the private nature of appropriation of production results [11]. Foreign researchers of the XIX-XX centuries proposed various theories of the economic cycle (and, consequently, the crisis as a «turning point from contraction to expansion») depending on the main, in their opinion, cause: the monetary theory, the theory of innovation, the psychological theory, the theory of under consumption, the theory of overinvestment, the theory of «sunspots – weather – harvest» [18].

«Classical» understanding of the crisis, formed at that time, meant a separate stage of functioning of the market economy, characterized by a decline in the economy and negative phenomena in the spheres of production, trade, finance.

In modern economic literature there are different approaches to understanding the essence of the crisis, its nature, which reflects the multifaceted nature of this concept. Let us consider some definitions.

In the Large Encyclopedic Dictionary the concept of «crisis» is interpreted as «...a sharp, abrupt break, a difficult transitional state» [15]. This approach emphasizes the possibility of «transition», as it implies a way out of this «heavy state». Other modern dictionaries also interpret the term «crisis» as a moment that separates what was before from what will be after; a turning point, a turning moment; a very dangerous, threat-filled situation that requires an immediate solution. Such interpretation is close to the authors of foreign books on economics and macroeconomics [18].

There are two main positions have been formed in studies on the problems of crisis management to understand the nature of the crisis. One group of authors (e.g., E.M. Korotkov, T.N. Rogova, V.K. Krutikov, K.V. Baldin, S.E. Kovan, etc.) focuses on the negative manifestations of the crisis, its destructive function. Other researchers (A.S. Bolshakov, V.Y. Zakharov, A.D. Chernyakhovsky, N.D. Koryagin, A.S. Lifshits, V.M. Pishchulov, etc.) consider crises as a contradictory phenomenon, analyse their positive sides and creative role.

Main pat

1. The focus on the negative impact of the crisis

Characterizing the essence of the crisis, T.N. Rogova states that «crisis is a major decline of the entire financial and economic system (production, trade), reflected in the growth of unemployment, reduction in consumption, bankruptcy of many firms, a sharp decline in the scale of capital investment» [16]. The emphasis in this understanding of the crisis is placed on its negative effect. We should note that this approach to the definition of the essence of the crisis characterizes this concept mainly at the macro level, and the role of the enterprise in this process is not specified.

E.M. Korotkov gives a general definition of crisis, taking into account the complexity of this concept: «Crisis is an extreme aggravation of contradictions in a socio-economic system (organization), threatening its viability in the environment» [7]. This definition links crisis to the real danger for the organization.

Undoubtedly, the crisis is a turning point, a consequence of the aggravation of contradictions in the socio-economic system (in the organization), but it reflects not only a difficult and dangerous state of the system (i.e. negative phenomena), but also positive opportunities associated with the release from the outdated, outmoded, opportunities and motives for renewal. We believe that the destructive function of the crisis manifests itself in the low readiness or unpreparedness of the system for the emergence of various crisis situations, in the absence of appropriate timely response from the management of the organization. In this case, there is a threat of system destruction, i.e. bankruptcy and liquidation of the business entity.

In our opinion, the negative characterization of the essence of the crisis is rather one-sided. Undoubtedly, the crisis adversely affects all spheres of enterprise activity, the national economy as a whole. However, the crisis opens the possibility of a «new round of development», because there is a targeted motivation of enterprises to maintain viability and presence in the market, which gives an impetus to innovation and leads to the emergence of new qualities of the system.

2 The emphasis on the healing function of the crisis, an impetus to development

J. Schumpeter, considering crises in connection with economic cycles, noted that «crises are a natural state of the organism, which, when it grows and develops, gets sick and then recovers. Therefore, the crisis brings with it not only indisposition, but also renewal» [8].

French economists T.K. Poshan and E.M. Morin emphasize that the «manifesting» function of the crisis is positive, as it allows the objects of research to improve their activities and mobilize efforts aimed at change» [12].

N.D. Koryagin, analyzing the essence of crisis, emphasizes its dual nature, «which simultaneously creates and destroys, forms preconditions and prepares conditions for further development. ...Any crisis conceals in itself the possibility of getting out of it, i.e. it is not only and not so much a purely negative phenomenon, but a break, a transition to another state – from the orderliness of the previous period to the orderliness of the next through the chaos of destruction and transformation of outmoded elements». Crises, according to the scientist, are progressive, because they carry out «the elimination of elements of the system, which has exhausted its development potential, and make room for strengthening the elements of a new system ...» [8].

I.V. Kachalov [5] notes the positive qualities of the crisis in the organization, consisting in the possibility of finding promising market segments and niches.

Modern researchers draw attention to the need for a dynamic approach to the analysis of the nature of the crisis, linking it to the stages of development of the system, the stages of the life cycle of the organization, the types of development.

In this regard, when analyzing the nature of crisis in an organization, researchers (A.D. Chernyakhovsky, E.M. Korotkov, N.D. Koryagin, A.S. Lifshits, etc.) should pay attention to the allocation of two dialectically interacting trends in the existence of a firm (enterprise): functioning and development. If functioning implies maintaining a certain stability in the life of the enterprise, preserving its integrity, providing the necessary resources and their proportionality, then development is associated with the factors of renewal, acquisition of new quality of the system, changes in the resource base, in personnel, with the application of new technologies, strengthening motivation. The source of crises can be both the contradiction between these opposite tendencies and each of them by itself [7]. Thus, we can point to the existence of crises of functioning and crises of development.

N.D. Koryagin, analyzing the main conceptual approaches to understanding the crisis, points to the interpretation of the crisis in modern Russian literature as «the result of aggravation of contradictions of functioning and development of socio-economic system». The author considers these processes as a dialectical unity of the main components of the socio-economic system. «Development destroys many processes of functioning, but at the same time creates conditions for the emergence of new ones, functioning limits development, but at the same time nourishes it» [8].

Developing this topic, A.S. Lifshits notes that «the distinction between functioning and development is of fundamental importance from the position of choosing the directions, means and technologies of anti-crisis management... Development crises are strategic crises, crises of economic, social and environmental potentials of the organization [10].

Analyzing the nature of the crisis of a socio-economic system, a number of authors (Koryagin, Pischulov, etc.) define it as a stage in the cyclical development of this system.

V.M. Pischulov, considering the crisis, defines it as a separate phase of the life cycle along with depression, rise and peak [13].

N.D. Koryagin notes: «Crisis is just a stage in the development of a system, after which quantitative changes pass into qualitative ones. ... Crisis is a natural and necessary stage of development» [8].

In our opinion, analyzing the manifestations of the crisis, we can note the possibility of crisis at each stage of the life cycle of the enterprise (birth, growth, maturity, aging).

Analysis of the causes and manifestations of crises in interaction with the issue of the stages of the life cycle of the organization is carried out by a number of researchers, among them are L. Greiner, I.K. Adizes, E.M. Korotkov, N.D. Koryagin, A.S. Lifshits and others. We agree with the position of these authors that the emergence of a crisis is possible at any stage of the life cycle.

To understand the nature of development crises, the reasons for their occurrence and to determine the possibilities of their management, the evolutionary model of the life cycle of an organization (the model of stages and crises of organizational growth) proposed by L. Greiner is of interest [14]. The American economist identified 5 stages of growth in the evolution and revolution of a socio-economic system. According to Greiner's model, the age and size of the organization determine the dominant type of management. With the increase in the size of the organization at each stage of its evolutionary growth, a crisis may occur due to the need to transition to a new type (style) of management. In the course of the organization's development, organizational and managerial crises arise – leadership, autonomy, control, red tape (boundaries), trust. These crises give birth to sources of new growth of the organization: growth through creativity (through creation, creative, intuitive management and enthusiasm); growth through transition to directive management and introduction of formal communication systems; growth through delegation of authority and decentralization of the organizational structure; growth through coordination; growth through development of cooperation.

I. Adizes, an American professor and expert in the field of change management, proposed a 10-stage model of an organization's life cycle, the criteria in which are flexibility (characteristic of variability) and controllability (characteristic of manageability). The older a company is, the more strictly it is controlled and becomes less flexible. The optimal combination of these parameters is reached at the stage of prosperity, so the task of management is to reach this stage and stay there as long as possible.

According to Adizes' concept, the main factor in the success of an organization is its ability to cope with the problems that arise at each stage of the cycle. Thus, he identifies the relationship: growth of the organization – change – problems. I. Adizes connects the causes of crises with the presence of problems in the organization during the transition from one stage of the life cycle to another. According to the degree of «solvability», problems can be «normal», which are resolved in the course of progressive development; «abnormal», when there are difficulties in their resolution, weakening its ability to develop and requiring external intervention; «pathological», which create a threat to the existence of the organization. It is the abnormal and pathological problems that characterize the crisis in the organization [1].

A.S. Lifshits connects the problems that give rise to crises with the types of possible development of the enterprise, noting that «the interpretation of the crisis should be linked to the concepts of «abnormality» or pathology. Normal problems – problems of progressive development, abnormal problems – problems of gradual regressive development, pathological problems – problems of developed, including rapid regression, leading to partial or complete loss of functionality and threatening the viability of the organization». The author believes that a crisis can occur at most stages of the life cycle, overlap with the stage of the life cycle, or represent the essence of any of the stages. «Overlapping» of the crisis on the stage of the life cycle exists at the progressive development of the enterprise and the presence of abnormal problems; pathological problems generate a crisis at regressive stages of the life cycle of the enterprise [10].

A reflection of the dynamic approach to the interpretation of crisis is that it is not seen as something unchangeable, but as a process that goes through several stages of its own development. This process is complicated by the fact that crises can arise at any stage of an organization's life cycle and can occur simultaneously; moreover, one crisis can give rise to others, and a whole chain of crises emerges.

The dynamic approach to the analysis of the essence of crisis, consideration of the phenomenon of crisis as a multistage process, as well as proof of the possibility of its occurrence at any phase of the life cycle of the organization – all this forms certain requirements to the anti-crisis policy of the enterprise. This policy should be focused not only on overcoming negative symptoms in the phase of acute crisis, getting out of the phase of chronic crisis, it should be aimed at preventing crisis situations, identifying the hidden crisis, and more

broadly – provide a whole system of measures to support the sustainable development of the organization.

The issue of the causes of crises in the organization is quite widely covered in the literature on crisis management. We agree with the statement of a number of authors that the root cause of the crisis is the growth and aggravation of the contradiction between the elements of the internal environment of the organization and the requirements of the external environment. Researchers divide various reasons into objective and subjective, external, independent of the activities of the enterprise, and internal, directly dependent on the activities of the enterprise, its management.

Most authors attribute objective causes of the crisis to cyclical needs for modernization and restructuring, and subjective causes to mistakes and shortcomings in management. E.M. Korotkov also distinguishes between natural and accidental, natural and artificial causes of crises, while N.D. Koryagin's work singles out force majeure – natural disasters – as an independent group. As part of the internal causes, he distinguishes 3 groups of factors – managerial, production and market. The author emphasizes that managerial factors have the greatest impact on the state of crisis [8]. A.T. Zub singles out 17 events – internal specific reasons provoking a crisis at an enterprise [20], and this is, of course, an incomplete list of them.

It should be noted that identification of the immediate causes that led to the crisis situation, their differentiation is of fundamental importance for the development of anti-crisis management measures.

There are several stages in the development of the domestic theory of anti-crisis management, differing in the formulation of the main tasks and understanding of the content of anti-crisis policy. At the stage of formation of ACM (in the 1990s and early 2000s) the exit from the crisis and the implementation of measures for financial recovery, prevention of bankruptcy of the enterprise, bankruptcy procedures through arbitration management was considered as its main task. In this period, anti-crisis policy was interpreted as a system of measures to get out of the crisis of the enterprise, aimed at the recovery of the enterprise in crisis. As a rule, within the framework of this approach the crisis was considered as an independent stage in the functioning of the enterprise. For example, this approach to the interpretation of anti-crisis policy prevailed in the economic literature on the problems of financial recovery of the enterprise [9].

V.E. Kerimov links ACM activities with overcoming crisis situations. He notes: «Anti-crisis management, on the one hand, allows preventing the deterioration of financial and economic results of commercial organizations, and on the other hand – to create conditions for assisting enterprises in crisis situations to bring them out of crisis [6].

Investigating the problem of crisis management from the perspective of the financial activity of the enterprise, V.E. Kerimov distinguishes the following types of its types due to the different financial condition of the enterprise:

- early crisis management – actions are aimed at preventing a crisis;
- anticipatory anti-crisis management is implemented when the financial condition of the organization deteriorates;
- crisis management during insolvency arises when the company's financial capacity declines;
- anti-crisis management during the period of financial rehabilitation and external management is focused on restoration of solvency, repayment of debts to counterparties;
- crisis management during bankruptcy is carried out if the organization is declared bankrupt.

Later, since 2007-2008, the understanding of the ACM content has been significantly expanding, it began to be considered as a set of methods and tools aimed not only at counteracting crisis situations arising at the enterprise, but also as a set of preventive measures that prevent the emergence of crisis, stabilize the situation and ensure further development of the socio-economic system. At the same time, the sphere of ACM has spread to the meso- and macro-level [17]. Among researchers there is an opinion according to which ACM is a system of measures to prevent a crisis, eliminate its negative consequences, to prevent a crisis at the emergence of its threat and to forecast crisis situations.

Thus, E.M. Korotkov indicates two goals of ACM; in his opinion, on the one hand, such management allows to anticipate crises, on the other hand, to mitigate their consequences and use the factors of crises for the development of the organization. «Anti-crisis management is a management in which the anticipation of

the danger of crisis, analysis of its symptoms, measures to reduce the negative consequences of the crisis and the use of its factors for subsequent development are put in a certain way» [7]. N.D. Koryagin identified two types of ACM depending on the content of measures: reactive and preventive. At the same time, he considers the crisis itself as a multistage process. At the stage of acute crisis, reactive crisis management is implemented, the purpose of which is to restore the pre-crisis state. Preventive, or proactive ACM involves «assessing the probability and consequences of potential crises, development of anti-crisis strategy, implementation of action plans to prevent crises» [8].

In the second half of the 2010s, an even broader view of the content of crisis management was formed in the ACM theory – anti-cyclical crisis management as a system of anticipatory measures aimed at crisis prevention. The purpose of such a policy is to ensure crisis-free development of the enterprise. According to this understanding, ACM is a comprehensive system of measures that prevent crisis situations and aimed at the sustainable functioning of the enterprise and its development [14, 17].

It should be emphasized that each subsequent ACM concept does not cancel the previous ones, but includes them, and the range of tasks solved by each type of policy becomes wider and more complex (fig. 1).

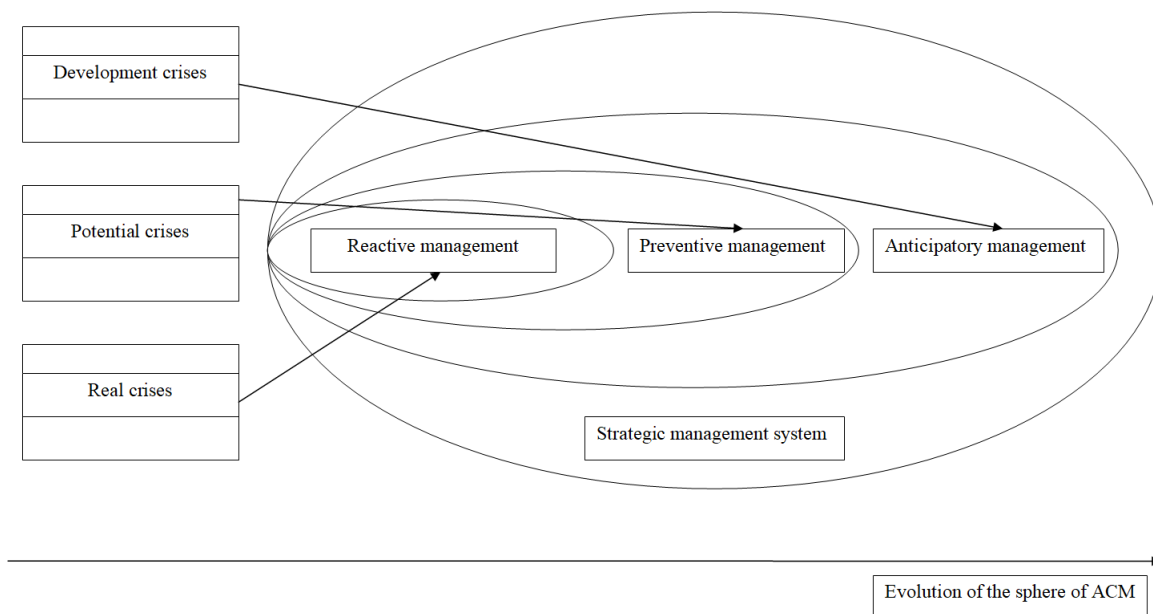


Figure 1. The evolution of types of anti-crisis policy

Source: composed by the author

Thus, we can indicate 3 levels of ACS as a system of management methods and tools, differing in the goals of anti-crisis policy, the breadth and complexity of its activities:

Level 1 – ACM as a system of measures to get out of the crisis, to overcome the crisis situation in the organization, its goal is to restore the pre-crisis state (reactive crisis management).

Level 2 – ACM as a system of measures to prevent, anticipate and avoid crisis situations, its goal is crisis prevention (preventive crisis management). Such management provides for monitoring of the state of external and internal environment factors, application of situational analysis methods.

Level 3 is the most complex, «anticipatory management», which involves a system of measures to ensure sustainable development of the organization, anticipation of changes and timely «restructuring» of work, application of forecasting tools and expansion of the planning horizon (anticipatory management). Such management covers all areas of the organization's activities and all functions, involves tracking, recognition, evaluation and overcoming of hidden uncertainties, the policy of «flexible development of the enterprise».

The crisis associated with the COVID-19 epidemic [3] had a special impact on the revision of views on crisis management. This crisis affected absolutely all economic entities. Especially small and medium-sized enterprises were affected [4], the potential of which was insufficient to regulate the situation. The most acute issues were issues related to logistics, supply chain of raw materials, equipment and other production

links. Only a comprehensive and systematic approach to crisis management allowed enterprises not only to maintain their positions in the market, but also to make a leap forward [4]. In a rapidly developing situation, risks have increased, requiring high-quality preventive crisis management. In particular, the well-known Russian economist A. Aganbegyan believes that the experience of the coronavirus pandemic allowed to make a significant leap in the development of crisis management, as the developed systems of measures proved to be effective not only at the country level, but also within individual enterprises [2].

The dual nature of crises predetermines the multi-purpose orientation of ACM and multifunctionality of its content. This is the peculiarity of the crisis management system. The unified ACM system includes tools for crisis prevention, diagnosis, crisis overcoming, enterprise restructuring strategy, crisis prevention methods, forecasting and planning methods, strategic management, as well as non-standard methods of personnel management.

With a certain convention, let us distinguish the goals and objectives of ACM, as well as its instruments and objects of influence depending on its type (Table 1).

Table 1 – Comparison of ACM types

Type of ACM	Objectives	Main tasks	Key methods and tools	Object of influence
1.Reactive	Exit from the crisis situation. Overcoming the real crisis.	Blocking negative crisis processes. Development of a system of anti-crisis measures and their implementation. Transition to a new operating model adequate to the requirements of the external environment.	Diagnosis of the main problems. Anti-crisis strategy. Rehabilitation. Restructuring.	A real crisis. Scope of the emergence of the crisis of functioning and all its communications. Changing the company's strategy.
2.Preventive	Prevent abnormal and pathological problems, prevent crisis situations.	Timely identification of growing negative problems and changes in the internal and external environment. Developing possible responses. Monitoring the functioning of all processes, their timely adjustment. Mitigation of acute crisis processes when they cannot be prevented.	Diagnosis of key indicators. Monitoring of functioning and development processes. «Weak signal» control. Planning and forecasting.	Potential Crisis. Spheres of production, marketing, finance, management organization. Changes in the company's strategy.

Type of ACM	Objectives	Main tasks	Key methods and tools	Object of influence
3. Anticipatory	Ensuring crisis-free, sustainable development.	Development of a set of measures (changes in the organization) to prevent (or minimize) possible losses. Ensuring sustainable financial and economic development of the organization	Diagnosis, complex analysis. Monitoring of functioning and development processes. Planning and forecasting. A set of strategic management methods.	Developmental Crisis. Internal and external environment of the enterprise. Economic potential. Enterprise management system. Changes in the company's strategy.

Source: composed by the author

Conclusion

The peculiarity of modern conditions of enterprises' activity is the high speed of changes in the external environment, instability and instability. The ongoing changes are caused by geopolitical factors, the increasing pace of technological transformation, the active process of digitalization, the development of telecommunications and information technologies. All this increases the level of complexity of company management, imposes high demands on the enterprise management, its competence, flexibility, creativity.

Based on the study of sources on the issues of crisis in the organization and anti-crisis policy, the paper shows the advantage of dialectical and dynamic approaches to their interpretation. From the dialectical position the essence of crisis is in the unity of its negative and positive sides, destructive and health-improving, creative function. Crisis is the result of the aggravation of contradictions between the elements of the internal environment of the organization and the requirements of the external environment; crisis should be considered as a dynamic process that accompanies all stages of the life cycle of the organization.

Analysis of the evolution of scientific views on anti-crisis management at the enterprise (ACM) allowed us to distinguish its three types (levels):

- 1) reactive ACM, carried out in the conditions of a real crisis, providing for a system of anti-crisis measures for recovery;
- 2) preventive ACM, the object of influence of which is a potential crisis; the accents in such management are diagnostics and monitoring, management "on weak signals";
- 3) anti-cyclical anti-crisis management aimed at preventing, anticipating pre-crisis phenomena, creating conditions for crisis-free and sustainable development. The main tools for implementing this policy are diagnostics, complex analysis, monitoring of processes, planning and forecasting, strategic management methods.

It should be emphasized that each level of ACM does not cancel the previous ones, but includes them, the range of tasks solved by each type of management becomes wider and more complex. We believe that all levels of ACM should be present in the management practice of a modern enterprise. Firstly, risks in the activities of the enterprise due to both external and internal factors always exist, and the probability of a crisis situation is significant. Secondly, the most important goal of effective management in the rapidly changing external and internal environment nowadays is to ensure the sustainability of the organization's development. We believe that crisis management tools should be integral components of sustainable development strategies of the enterprise.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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