



## Psychological Profile of Successful Criminal Police Officer

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### ABSTRACT

The article deals with the psychological peculiarities of professional activity of employees of criminal police units of Ukraine, the basic requirements of the profession for psychological characteristics, knowledge and skills of criminal police officers, motives for professional choice, psychological indications and contraindications to professional activity in position. The relevance of the study is due to the fact that the criminal police officers perform their duties in difficult and sometimes in special and extreme conditions, therefore, for the effective selection and training of personnel, it is necessary to know the professionally important qualities (PIQ) of criminal police officers. Participants. In order to study the professionally



important qualities of police officers a research was conducted during 2018. 350 criminal police officers (298 male policemen, 52 female policemen) from 20 regions of Ukraine took part in it (aged 25 to 42); the special ranks of the respondents are from lieutenant to lieutenant colonel of the police; all police officers were characterized by experts as "successful". Research methods: observations, surveys, interviews with experts, psychological testing, methods of mathematical statistics. Results. The analysis of the average psychological profile of the "successful" criminal police officers' personality allows characterizing the employees as persons with asthenic type of response, high activity and high level of aspiration, striking emotional reactions, which, at the same time, are sufficiently controlled. Specialists have strength and lability nervous system, a leading style of behavior, the ability to take risks with strong stress resistance. Regarding the motivational sphere, the first place in importance belongs to the motives and values related to the personal self-realization. Conclusions. The criminal police officers' professional activities are characterized by complexity and emotional tension, occurring in difficult conditions; in order to be successful in performing his/her duties, the police officer must be psychologically prepared for the activity, possess a range of professionally important qualities, knowledge and skills.

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## 1. Introduction

At the stage of formation and updating of the law-enforcement system of Ukraine, the selection of a new staff of the National Police is of crucial importance. Contemporary criminal police, which exercises a range of the most important law-enforcement tasks, is a part of the Ukrainian National Police. The society expects not only control of the observance of law and order but also honesty, justice, reliability, responsible attitude towards the fulfillment of professional duties from the Criminal Police. It is interesting to note that a policeman should be an example of legal culture and have responsible attitude to serve society by ensuring the protection of human rights and freedoms, combating crime, maintaining public safety and order. Among the primary tasks of increasing effectiveness of the law enforcement activity the most important is establishment of the system will allow to the agencies and units of the Criminal Police with employees who have necessary qualities for successful acquirement of the law enforcement profession, and further, to keep their efficiency, to increase reliability, to develop a professional potential [1]. The determinative basis for such effective and efficient system is an appropriate professional psychological selection which is a complex of measures aimed to ensure the qualitative selection of the personnel based on the evaluation of the development level of the necessary psycho-physiological, psychological and personal characterization according to the qualification requirements of the professional activity [2].

According to the Law of Ukraine "On the National Police" and other legal acts of Ukraine, criminal police, which exercises a range of the most important law-enforcement tasks, is a part of the National Police. Numerous studies of the professional activities of the police officers showed that the criminal police officer [3]:

- carries out the corresponding tasks and functions in one of the areas of activity of the structural unit of criminal police;
- takes a direct part in practical measures of response to the detection of criminal activities according to the focus of the structural unit;
- conducts operative investigation activity in the territory maintained by a structural unit and also participates



in carrying out operative combinations in operative-investigation cases and carries out measures focused on improving operative investigation activity, upgrading of its quality;

- performs intelligence measures in the criminal environment to detect the acting criminal elements in the served territory;

- collects information on the detection of criminal activity in the line of activity of a structural unit in the served territory;

- is a member of operation team, which operates in line with one of the focus areas of combating criminal activity, according to the order of chief of the structural unit;

- makes cases of criminal records in accordance with relevant types of criminal activity in the territory of service and keeps records based on the results of operation investigation activities;

- maintains interaction with investigative bodies, provides operative support of criminal proceedings before their consideration in court and bringing the perpetrators to responsibility;

- makes proposals on the protection of victims, witnesses and trial participants to senior executives;

- contributes to the reimbursement of losses caused by the criminal activity to the state, individuals and legal entities;

- carries out activity on adherence to the principles of legality, discipline, secrecy order;

- performs appropriate tasks and functions for the prevention, timely detection and cessation of general criminal offenses, disclosure of causes and conditions contributing to the commission of such kinds of offenses, carries out their prevention;

- takes measures for the detection of criminal offenses; breaks off detected criminal offenses;

- takes measures aimed at eliminating risks to life and health of natural persons and public security, which were caused by criminal offence;

- provides timely response to applications and notifications on criminal offenses or events, conducts investigative and secret investigation (search) actions in criminal proceedings under the written instruction of the investigator, prosecutor. While exercising instructions of the investigator, prosecutor, he/she uses the investigator's powers. At the same time, he/she is not empowered to take procedural actions in the criminal proceeding on his/her own initiative or to file a motion to investigating judge or prosecutor;

- takes necessary operative investigation measures, fulfills written assignments of investigator, instructions of prosecutor and decisions of investigating judge about conducting of secret investigative-search actions, request of authorized government bodies, establishments and organizations within his/her powers according to the laws which are a legal basis of police, operative-investigation and procedural activities;

- provides security, with the involvement of other units, of officials of court and law-enforcement bodies, persons who render assistance, contribute to operative investigation activity, persons who take part in the criminal proceeding, their family members and close relatives;

- complies with the request, within his/her competence, of law-enforcement bodies of other countries or international law-enforcement organizations in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine, as well with constituent acts and rules of the international law-enforcement organizations where Ukraine is a member;

- searches for persons who hide out from the preliminary investigation bodies, investigating judge, court, evade fulfillment of criminal punishment, the missing and other persons in cases specified by law;

- detects and records facts of illegal actions;



- identifies a person for unknown dead body;
- informs relevant state bodies about the facts and data indicating a security threat of the society and the state as well as about violations of the legislation related to the official activities of officers;
- cooperates with other criminal police officers, investigators, policemen and officials of other law-enforcement bodies, including relevant agencies of foreign states and international anti-terrorism organizations, in order to prevent, determine and cease legal offences promptly and fully;
- takes all possible measures to provide urgent (including premedical) assistance to persons who have suffered due to criminal offenses, accidents, as well as to persons who have been in a situation dangerous to their lives or health;
- takes measures to determine the personal data of persons who are not able to report information about themselves due to health condition, age or other circumstances;
- takes measures in order to prevent delinquency among children.

Criminal investigation (criminal police) official also exercises other tasks defined by the legal acts regulating activities of the National Police, operative-investigation and procedural activities. Operative-investigation activity (OIA) is a basis of official activity of the criminal police units; thus, functional obligations of the criminal police officer are to carry out operative-investigation activities, which are performed publicly and in secret through conducting operative-investigation activities to protect life, health, human rights and freedoms, property, society and the state from criminal encroachments.

The criminal police officer conducts his/her activities on the principles of the rule of law, observance of human rights and freedoms, legality, openness and transparency, political neutrality. The criminal police officer is guided in his/her activities by: the Constitution of Ukraine, the Criminal Procedural Code of Ukraine, the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offenses, the Criminal Executive Code of Ukraine, the Laws of Ukraine "On the National Police", "On Operative Investigation Activity", in accordance with the Instruction on the Organization of Operative Investigation Activities of the Operations Units of the National Police of Ukraine ( approved by the order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs), the Regulations on the Department of Criminal Investigation of the National Police of Ukraine, other legislative acts and job descriptions. Operational investigation activity is the basis of the official activity of the units of the Criminal Police; in addition to the use of special legal, criminological and forensic knowledge, it involves the mandatory taking into account modern advances in psychological science. A modern employee of a criminal police unit should be able to deal with information on objects of operation focus, has a complex of professionally important communicative qualities, be able to establish relationships with all strata of the social environment, be a reference person with deep knowledge, understanding of people, attractive image and characterological features depending on the situation [3].

## 2. Literature Review

Analysis of research papers in legal psychology, labor psychology, and social psychology shows that the issues of psychological support of professional activities of the criminal police units have always been of interest of domestic and foreign scholars. Many scientists dealt with the topic under consideration [4-22].

It can be concluded that officials of the criminal police carry out professional activities in complicated and, sometimes, in special and extreme conditions [4]. Functional duties of an official of the operational units of the criminal police consist in realizing operative-investigation activity, which is carried out publicly and secretly through conducting operative-investigation measures focused on the protection of life, health, human rights and freedoms,



property, security of society and the state from criminal encroachments [5]. It is obvious that the performance of official duties by a policeman requires legal, psychological-pedagogical knowledge, many special skills, as well as a number of professionally important individually-psychological qualities (psychophysiological, intellectual, motivational, characterological, emotional-volitional) [6].

Research shows that a policeman primarily must have the appropriate legal background, knowledge of criminal law and process, departmental and international statutory documents regulating observance of human rights (orders, decrees, instructions, etc.); he/she establishes cooperation with agencies and units of the Security Service, the prosecutor's office, organizes information flow, record keeping, report on work performed and its control. An expert must also have psychological knowledge and skills that will help him/her to communicate with citizens, interrogate offenders and events witnesses, prevent and resolve conflicts, influence people in conditions of crowds and mass riots, contact with colleagues in different areas (patrol police, guard police, special police, etc.), offset the negative impact of stress factors, etc. [7].

In addition to the legal and psychological knowledge and skills, a police officer should have additional information about the operational situation and the location of squads, representatives of non-governmental organizations for the protection of law and order; the descriptive information about persons, vehicles and property which are on the wanted list; places of mass gathering of anti-social elements, most expectable for crimes commission; persons discharged from imprisonment; location of the most important objects of state authorities and administration in the region, fire-fighting unit, dormitories, enterprises, organizations and institutions, etc.; the location of streets, lanes, courtyards, squares, and such like adjacent to the route.

There are several components of the professional activity of the criminal police officers in literature [4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 18, 19, 20]:

1. Interpersonal communication. This component includes interrogation of witnesses, victims, suspects, convicts, interviews with experts, and work with confidential and other information sources. Communicative components account for up to 40% of work hours of a police officer.

2. Operative investigation measures. This component composes 35% of work hours of a police officer, including: searches (14%), visits to the scene of the crime (6%), visits for arrest (15%). Policemen of some operation units spent much of working time (60%) for an active surveillance.

3. Paper work. This component takes 27% of working time on average.

In view of the results of functional analysis of operative-official activities of the criminal police units, scholars propose the classification of measures of OIA.

The first block of operative investigation measures includes ones that have a clearly defined subject matter and aimed at the direct acquisition and recording of factual evidence of criminal acts.

The second block includes measures focused on the search and acquisition of data, which is of operative investigation interest, from different sources.

Domestic scholars think that in the sphere of operative investigation activity, constant opposition to the crime environment is a specific feature distinguishing OIA among other activities. In addition, compared to other types of operative-official activity in the police, operative investigation activity provides for a direct contact with lawbreakers under informal (not covered by the legislation) circumstances [10, 11].

**The aim of the study** is to characterize the main professionally important qualities of a successful criminal police officer.

The tasks:

- 1) to establish the psychological characteristics of the professional activity of the criminal police officers;
- 2) to determine the characterological features of the criminal police officer on the basis of the Standardized method of personality research (SMPR) by L. Sobchyk;
- 3) to establish the peculiarities of the police officers' motivation sphere, in particular, the level of self-actualization and motives for professional self-determination;
- 4) to investigate the properties of police officers' nervous processes through the use of a tapping test (modification by E. Ilin).

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Participants

In order to study the professionally important qualities of the criminal police officers, a research was conducted during 2018. 350 criminal police officers (298 male policemen, 52 female policemen) from 20 regions of Ukraine took part in it (aged 25 to 42); the special ranks of the respondents are from lieutenant to lieutenant colonel of the police, all police officers were characterized by experts as "successful".

#### 3.2. Materials

In order to investigate the professionally important qualities, the methods of observations, surveys, interviews with experts, psychological testing, methods of mathematical statistics were applied.

To study the type of higher nervous activity (HNA) a tapping-test (E. Ilin technique) was used [1]; a modified version of the questionnaire "Motivation of Professional Choice" (B. Bovin, N. Miahkykh) was used to study the peculiarities of the police motivation sphere [6]. In order to investigate the characterological features of personality, the adapted L. Sobchyk MMPI variant – Standardized method of personality research (SMPR) was used, which allows to distinguish a number of important personality characteristics (hypochondria, depressiveness, demonstrativity, impulsiveness, rigidity, introversion etc.) [7]. The level of personality self-actualization was determined using the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) [8].

#### 3.3. Procedure

Testing to determine the personal characteristics of police officers on the basis of SMPR and POI was carried out in a group method using paper forms, the results were calculated by psychologists using "keys". Interviews for the diagnosis of the motivational sphere were conducted in writing. When answering the questionnaire, the police officers identified the leading motives for their professional choices. The E. Ilin method of testing was carried out using pencils and paper sheets. All psychodiagnostic studies were performed in the morning. The significance for all statistical tests was set at  $p < 0.05$ . All statistical analyzes were performed with the SPSS software, version 21, reported to psychological researchers.

### 4. Results

An analysis of the average person's profile of the "successful" officer of the criminal police allows characterizing employees as people with a sthenic reaction type, high activity and high level of purposefulness, vivid emotional reactions, which, at the same time, are sufficiently controlled. The characteristics of the professionals are leadership style of behavior, the capacity for risk under the expressed stress tolerance.

Integrative assessment of personality profile according to SMPR allows attributing profile type to a lineal one

in the range from 40 to 65–70 T-points. The principal peaks in the profile are scales No. 4, 6 and 9 that allows one to describe a person in the context of characteristics of the predominance of stimulating features and the intensity of the nervous processes. A modest rise of these scales in the profile indicates a pronounced tendency towards self-realization and counteraction to the impact of environment. An employee of the police unit of criminal police is characterized by persistent characterological features: extraversion, spontaneity, aggressiveness, impulsivity. Such features are characteristic for individuals with a strong type of higher nervous activity, a high level of lability of nervous processes. In interpersonal relations, they are characterized as responsible, authoritative, leadership, independent persons; sociability and interpersonal skills are peculiar for them. However, the profile of criminal police employee has a slight increase in his configuration on scales 1 and 3 that indicates the ability to control the manifestations of impulsivity.

Analysis of research results allows concluding "successful" police officers have the following variations of profile types:

a) there is an increase on the scales 4 and 9. Such persons are characterized by some degree of impulsiveness, a steady tendency to risk and a search for danger, they are brave, courageous and aggressive. In interrelations, they are irritable, choleric, feel insufficient social conformity and have lower self-control;

b) the scales 6 and 9 are fixed as the leading ones. The tendency to the leadership, activity, insistence, expediency takes center stage in the character of such persons; they are self-consistent and ambitious;

c) personal profile is characterized by leading scales 4, 7 and 9. Policemen are characterized by the balance of sthenic and egocentric characteristics; they show a high level of aspirations and motivation, sociability;

d) scales 3 and 9 are leading in the profile. Inflated self-esteem, ignoring difficulties, significant but unorganized activity, selfishness, enthusiasm, the ability to sustained efforts and increase of performance efficiency when other people are around are peculiar to character of such persons.

Data averaging by the method of SMPR allowed determining the personal characteristics of the profession group. Thus, the availability of the leading scale 9 is a distinctive feature for 70% of the profiles (in different combinations with other scales); the scale 9 does not dominate in 16% of interviewees, while the leading ones are other scales – mainly No 1, 3, 6. Scales No 2, 8, 0 hold leading positions in 14% of interviewees' profiles that is non-typical for the group.

Researches have made it possible to establish that persons who have the following features are the most qualified for the service in criminal police units:

- satisfaction with the somatic condition, lack of a tendency to complain about health;
- active critical attitude to the statements of others;
- distrustfulness;
- extraversion and spontaneity;
- attention and interest in current political events;
- lack of common fears (darkness, altitude, etc.);
- emotional balance;
- self-confidence and self-reliance;
- lack of situational and personal anxiety;
- confidence in the great social significance of police activity;
- social extravert nature;

- interest in life;
- some mystery of character.

Research data makes it possible to include some additional qualities into the list of general professionally important qualities for police officers, as follows:

- drive to high individual standards;
- denial of privileges and patronage;
- high-level sense of justice and duty;
- expressed self-esteem;
- moderate sensitivity to the reactions of others;
- lack of need for dependence;
- freedom from somatic discomfort;
- ability to show leadership features;
- optimism, confidence in coping with problems and stresses.

Table 1 provides recommended test parameters of SMPR for applicants for posts of criminal police staff. Strength and lability of the nervous processes are among professional important qualities of criminal police staff. It is found out that several types of profiles are specific to successfully operating policemen.

**Table 1.** Test values of SMPR for vocational selection of staff for the criminal police units

	Indicator value											
Acceptable maximum	Scales position is not above 70 T-points											
Correction optimum	up to 60 T-points; value K-F is less than 17 poor points											
Acceptable values of scales and correction	up to 65 T-points; value K-F = 17 poor points											
Leading scales	4	9 and	6	9 and	3	9 and	7	9 and	3	1 and	4	1 and
Optimal values of a leading scale (T-points)	68	62-54-	67	62-50-	65	60-55-	65	60-55-	60	55-54-	58	55-60
Possible values of a leading scale (T-points)	70	up to	70	up to	68	up to	70	up to	63	up to	63	up to
Acceptable profile position	63	up to	60	up to	63	up to	63	up to	59	up to	60	up to
Isolated spike on-scale 9 is possible up to 70 T-points												

Approximately half (55%) of the interviewees showed a medium-high type of higher nervous activity (HNA) (Ye. Ylyn technique). Such a type is characterized by: a) a high tempo of touches during the first 10 seconds and a moderate decrease in tempo in the last 5 seconds of the tapping test; b) stable tempo of touches during the action period. Almost a third part (30%) has a strong type of HNA, as evidenced by the "convex" type of the curve with an increase in touches tempo in the intervals of 6–10 and 11–15 seconds and drop to the baseline level in the last 5 seconds of the tapping test. About 10% of the surveyed employees demonstrated a profile peculiar to the middle-weak nervous system (initially the rate decreases then it increases and decreases again) and only 5% of the respondents have

a weak nervous system, as evidenced by a continuous sharp decrease in tapping rate over time.

Lability of the nervous processes in the central nervous system is defined through calculating number of touches during the first 10 seconds. Thus, it was obtained the following data (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Indicators of labile nervous system based on the results of the finger tapping test

Points	Number	Number of persons (%)
5	> 70	31
4	64-69	36
3	60-63	22
2	58-59	6
1	< 58	5

The table shows that majority of policemen have good and excellent indicators of lability of nervous processes (67% of interviewees got 4 and 5 points), and only 11% of employees have a low lability (1 and 2 points). The obtained data strongly confirms the importance of indicators of intensity and lability of the nervous system for the successful professional activity of the employees of criminal police.

The study of motives for profession selection of the police officers was based on restricted questionnaire that is a modified variation of "Motivation of professional choice". The analysis of the obtained data shows that majority of the surveyed persons is characterized by a poly-motivated profession choice. Motives and values related to personal self-fulfillment are uppermost in order of importance: interest in police career caused, in turn, by the emotional and volitional needs of the individual in seeking new experiences, risk, adrenaline rush, the desire to "prove yourself", "to realize their own abilities", to master a "courageous" profession, to learn to overcome the danger and difficulties, realize own potential, increase self-esteem. 36% of the interviewed experts have similar motives as the main ones in their responses. Group of motives which can be united by the term "drive for communication" is the second in order of importance. A large part of the surveyed officials (25%) prioritize such values as a desire to work with people, to win in situations of "rivalry", "conflict", struggle with the enemy; the desire to "dominate" over an opponent, lead, gain recognition from other people. The third place in terms of frequencies of mention belongs to socially significant motives, such as the desire to take an active part in the fight against crime, to make a positive contribution to people and the country by virtue of professional activity, to improve the operation of law enforcement bodies, etc. Those sorts of motives prevail in the responses of 15% of surveyed policemen. Motives related to utilitarian values, such as the desire to official uniform, carry weapons, have stable income, to receive benefits of the police officer, take up the fourth place. The motives are peculiar to 14% of the surveyed officials. The last place belongs to the motives that are not related to the specifics of police activities: the desire to solve difficult economic and real-life situations, unemployment, and dissatisfaction with previous work. Such motives for profession choice are typical for 10% of respondents. Thus, values and needs associated with personal self-actualization, the desire to realize their potential and capabilities, to be a person one can and should be, take the most significant role among the motives of professional identity. Some researchers believe that self-actualization drive is one of the indicators of motivational maturity for service in criminal police. Self-actualization is associated with activities under the conditions of danger, struggle and risk, active communication in specific situations.

Level of personal self-actualization was identified by virtue of Personal Orientation Inventory (POI, Johns-Crandall). Studies show that successful police officers are mainly characterized by a high (40%) and very high (32%) level of self-actualization, which is determined on the basis of POI (Table 3).

The level of self-actualization and the degree of professionalism (according to expert evaluation) are united by the significant coefficients of the Spearman's rank correlation ( $r = 0.48-0.60$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Thus, the level of self-actualization can be considered as an additional indicator of individual maturity for professional activities in criminal police.

**Table 3.** Respondents' distribution according to self-actualization

Level	Response percentage (%)
Very high	32
High	40
Medium	18
Low	10

Table 4 includes the main motivational factors of professional choice of operation units' employees. The data was obtained during police surveying, and rating points were marked depending on the structure of the value orientations of a particular person. Based on the table data, most criminal police employees are characterized by in-depth motives of profession choice which are connected with self-development and education, realization of cognitive and professional interests. The most rating points were for the desire to study (8.38), the desire to succeed in police career (7.85), an opportunity to obtain education (7.37), to have a sustainable income (7.35), profound interest in work (7.13), the desire to serve in a paramilitary unit (6.78), cognitive interest in police career (6.56), the desire to fight against crime.

**Table 4.** Motivators of professional choice of the criminal police officers

Motivators	Rating point (from 1 to 10)
Romantic dreams inspired by the influence of books, films etc.	5.51
Family traditions	4.12
Reference of friends and acquaintances who work in police	6.23
Prestige value of police service	7.12
Drive for activity related with communication	5.66
Agitation efforts of human resource department	3.12
Drive for moral satisfaction from work	4.67
Cognitive interest in the police staff activities	6.56
Concern of high crime rate	4.30
Striving for risk and danger	6.0
Desire to study	8.38
Drive for intelligence work	4.57
Desire to fight against crime actively	6.43
Proclivity for service in paramilitary units	6.78
Aspiration for active and diverse work	5.87
Desire to succeed in police career	7.85
Solution for difficult economic conditions	6.05
Desire to feel safety	4.22
Desire for self-reform, character change	5.78
Desire to wear a uniform, to carry arms	6.58
Pursuit of justice, truth	4.90
Strong dissatisfaction with previous work	5.28
Need for time off	3.26
Opportunity to get education	7.37
Strong interest in police activities	7.13
Opportunity to have a stable income	7.35

Matter of chance

3.50

Smaller value is peculiar to "deficiency" motives that are related to the needs for safety and satisfaction with the following demands: to have a uniform and arms, search for solutions for difficult economic conditions, dissatisfaction with previous work, romantic dreams, drive for activity connected with communication etc.

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

Many scholars have conducted generalization of characteristics of modern police activities [18-22], and own research allows summarizing it's the main psychological features, which distinguish it among other types of professional activity. They include:

- focus on ensuring the rule of law and observance of human rights;
- the need to make prompt decisions and have a high responsibility for them; official powers;
- emotional intenseness and tension, psychophysical stress;
- the availability of organizational and extreme factors;
- specific nature of objects of professional activity;
- tolerance to uncertain situations;
- importance of leadership and team work of units;
- taking into account the gender characteristics of the police;
- humanistic orientation of activity.

The profession of a policeman is among the complex ones, which require of a person certain abilities, psychological qualities, skills. Thus, a professional – a criminal police officer – must have:

- high psychophysiological endurance and performance associated with the lack of fixed working hours: the length of working time significantly exceeds the established standards: often the police work without days off, and cases of night work are not uncommon;

- advanced attention (stability, ability for rapid switching, concentration, distribution) as criminal police official has to shadow an object, wait, accompany him/her for a long time; the ability to notice barely visible changes in the surveillance object;

- a stable nervous system due to the need to resist a significant emotional stress, overcome the sense of fear, insecurity, uncertainty, high lability of the nervous processes and reaction to the movable object, good physical coordination, high rate of movements, to act quickly in the context of time shortage;

- developed visual and acoustic sensory systems, good eye, sound localization in space;

- advanced intelligence (verbal, nonverbal, crystallized, free, emotional);

- formed mental processes of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, ability to generate new ideas, associations, divergent thinking, ability to sum up, classify, generalize;

- various communicative qualities: the ability to prepossess people for communication; to establish contacts with the right people of interest quickly, the ability to find the optimal form and "position" of communication, the ability to persuade the opponent, "manipulate" the interlocutor, defend own point of view;

- conversation;

- emotional and volitional qualities: the ability to take responsibility in difficult situations, evaluate own strengths and capabilities objectively, overcome difficulties, ability to "keep his head" in conflict situations, act decisively and boldly at the moments of danger; in addition, the police officer must be good at role transformation,



linguistic ingenuity, concealment of intentions for a successful performance of the duties. Criminal police employee is characterized by personal characteristics such as independence, activity, courage, readiness for reasonable risk, dominance, extraversion, aggressiveness, initiative, perseverance, optimism.

According to scholars [6, 9, 16], operational activity of employees of the criminal police units is among "critical" kinds of activity which are performed under extreme conditions. The activity of the criminal police unit is characterized by psychological special aspects, which are mainly specific for operative work, the combination of which leads to their uniqueness, in particular:

- active opposition to the criminal environment and "near the criminal" infrastructure;
- secrecy of a significant part of operative-investigation measures;
- interested and, generally, coercive nature of most types of communication in operative investigation activities;
- the need for conspiracy of behavior, social roles and true psycho-emotional states of the subjects of operative and investigation activities.

The results of our research are confirmed by scientific findings of leading scientists [3; 4; 6; 9; 11, 15, 18, 19].

The research confirmed that successful mastering of criminal police officers' profession largely depends on the degree of formation of the main professionally important qualities: 1) strong or medium-strong type of nervous system, high or average level of lability; 2) the formation of character traits (spontaneity, courage, extroversion, confidence, optimism, self-control); 3) average or high level of self-actualization; 4) a high level of professional motivation; 5) the formation of emotional-volitional qualities (the ability to get over difficulties, to take responsibility, emotional stability); 6) average and above average level of general abilities; 7) high or average level of communicative abilities; 8) a sufficient development level of cognitive processes and psychomotor properties; 9) sufficient sensitivity of the analyzers.

For the purpose of professional psychological selection of candidates for the criminal police, it is important to check the level of development of:

- a) personal qualities (characterological features);
- b) motives of professional choice (self-fulfillment, communication, recognition, achievement, safety, comfort);
- c) general abilities of candidates for service.

Holding service competition, it is expedient for psychologists to use the following instruments as psychodiagnostic ones:

- a) subjective questionnaires: Standardized Method of Personality Research (SMPR, a version of MMPI, L. Sobchik) or Individually Typological Questionnaire (ITQ, L. Sobchik);
- b) finger-tapping test (modified by E. Ilin);
- c) diagnostic methods of personal motivation: Self-Actualization Scale (Jones-Crandall); Motivational Structure – Self-Actualization Test (SAT, Yu. Aleshin, L. Gozman); Level of Subjective Control (LSC, adapted by G. Ksenofontova) [3-5, 7-9].

Data averaging by the method of SMPR allowed determining the personal characteristics of the profession group of criminal police officers. Thus, the availability of the leading scale 9 is a distinctive feature for 70% of the profiles (in different combinations with other scales); the scale 9 does not dominate in 16% of interviewees, while the leading ones are other scales – mainly No 1, 3, 6. Scales No 2, 8, 0 hold leading positions in 14% of interviewees' profiles that is non-typical for the group. Strength and lability of the nervous processes are among professional

important qualities of criminal police staff. Successful police officers are mainly characterized by a high (40%) and very high (32%) level of self-actualization, which is determined on the basis of POI. Most criminal police officers are characterized by in-depth motives of profession choice which are connected with self-development and education, realization of cognitive and professional interests. The level of self-actualization can be considered as an important additional indicator of individual maturity for professional activities in criminal police.

*Prospects for further research in this direction.* Further research in this area is related to the study of psychological features of professional activities of police officers of other mass professions – investigators, patrol officers, police inspectors, etc.

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