

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS A VALUE IN A KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY

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Abstract: The paper considers modern self-management methods and it also presents the benefits of coaching in personal and professional life, which affects the development of a knowledge-based society.

Key words: personal development, professional development, knowledge-based society, coaching, soft skills

Introduction

Professional development depends on personal growth and it creates a knowledge-based society. Personal growth comprises the whole of genetic, educational and social conditions. It at the stage of waking up one's awareness when a need to change oneself appears along with the need to develop new competences and broaden the scope of one's influence. The level of one's awareness in pursuing a career in a knowledge-based society becomes a multidimensional value.

Personal Development

“The Two Worlds Report”[2] shows how difficult self-assessment is. In the Report 18 soft competences were assessed, first in the form of a self-assessment task and then as an assessment performed by employers. Differentiating tendency proved to work better for those involved in self-assessment, who placed themselves in the range between 28% and 85%, and where professional experience in a given trade came the lowest whereas task completion came the highest. On the part of the employers for the same competences similarly the range was between 15% and 43%, where 15% is pro-activity and 43% is creativity and innovativeness. The variables which were likely to have a decisive influence on particular assessment decisions involved giving specific feature matching specific behaviour. Is every employer perceived innovativeness perceived in the same way by an employee?

If one set was to be created and named “I” and the set was to contain two subsets “life” and “work”, then how far would they overlap, complement each other and draw from each other so that they could function?

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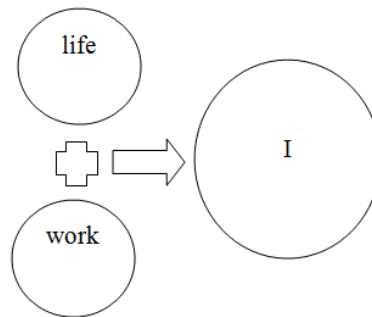


Figure 1. Diagram showing the influence of work and professional life on man's life
Source: prepared by the authors

We develop social competences also known as people skills from the very first moments of our lives. The most important ones – Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Intelligence Quotient (IQ) decide how far we will get in the world, what job we will get and how we will evolve in our professional lives [3].

According to personal advisers, getting a job depends in 70% on our professional knowledge and in 30% on our social skills. However, when it comes to losing a job, it happens in 70% due to a shortage of social competences and in 30% because of lack of expertise.

The following are the competences comprised in social skills:

[based on a 5-point scale where 1 means not important and 5 means very important]

1. verbal communication 4.69
2. honesty/reliability 4.59
3. ability to work in a team 4.54
4. interpersonal skills 4.5
5. strong work ethics 4.46

These were five the highest ranked competences, those that received the lowest assessment included:

6. courtesy, good manners 3.82
7. tactfulness 3.75
8. creativity 3.59
9. sense of humour 3.25
10. entrepreneurial skills 3.23

As far as the set of requirements is concerned it seems that each of these competences fits both sets and their development within the area of life has a significant influence on the area of work. There are three aspects of soft skills: Cognitive aspect – it is connected with knowledge, where and how a given skill should be used;

Motivational aspect – this aspect does not require conscious motivation to be applied as it activates when needed;

Behavioural aspect – it recognizes applications of a given competence and provides assessment how helpful it is in a given situation.

Creating one's professional image relies on using one's soft skills, participating in a job interview, resolving a problem, developing a project in a team or selling a project. School education prepares only for work based on knowledge and it lacks personal coaching and hands-on experience.

The first step to personal development occurs through observation and imitation. This is the man's basic competence. Personal competences translate directly into behaviours in the adult life. The next step takes place though adjusting to one's social group. What we have learnt in the primary social group, which is family, is later verified here. The competences supported by a group are reinforced, those not accepted will be denied, buried and not applied any more. Are we fully aware when selecting particular skills? – actually, very little so. The level of knowledge i.e. the behavioural aspect becomes active at the age of 14-18, which is an optimistic version as it may actually never start to work as well. Then we will go through our life failing to consciously manage our inner resources.

Professional development

The moment of a conscious choice puts us into a position of personalities that stand out on the labour market. A high level of awareness of social competences affects the quality of services that we offer. According to a study "The Two Worlds Report" it is surprising that young employees (29%) are not aware of their strong and weak points, and this type of knowledge is necessary to start self improvement. Other shortages include: out of trade experience – 54%, trade experience – 53%, self management in time – 41%, multitasking – 39%, coping with stress – 39%, coping with unexpected situations – 35%. On a knowledge-based labour market experience tends to be most important. Persons with high social resources, considerable expertise and low experience are disappearing. There is also a group of people with average knowledge and high skills, with a high ability to adapt and learn.

How should we complete and develop social competences in adult life? We do not have measurable means to examine ourselves; such self-examination usually takes place in particular social situations and we are assessed by other participants on the basis of usefulness or the lack of it. This is a level of assessment which is deficient in terms of measurability. Competency tests are selective in nature and are based on a wishful thinking process: "I wish I behaved that way".

The first level of effectiveness is the level of performing a given task in real-life situation – we are assessed by our superior, colleague, or customer. Getting to know one's resources is the first step to self development.

Currently many mechanisms are used for the recruitment of new employees: interviews, tests, competency based role plays, assessment centres, etc. This is a huge change for job seekers and a challenge for employers.

Human development in a knowledge-based society

The concept of knowledge-based society shows great dynamics.[5] In the 21st century knowledge is becoming a basic economic component and a foundation for development. The term information society refers to tools of communication, information storage and processing. Management becomes very important according to the “just-in-time” philosophy which introduces the concept of fast management in response to customer’s needs.[6] When translating the language of philosophy from a business field into a field of competences, we discover a modern way of knowledge management and adjusting the professional image to the labour market. Thereby we limit the rate of unemployment while making adults get used to permanent education and searching for one’s professional field. A high level of soft skills affects directly the professional development and the level of job satisfaction, both from psychological and economic point of view.

Man is the carrier of knowledge, its developer and then participant. Full cooperation, exchange and relatedness positively affect the development of knowledge-based society. Thus, it is necessary to prepare man as early as in school education (“Skills and competencies which should be demonstrated by university students after the cycle of lectures comprising the content of fundamental courses include in particular:

- using fundamentals of mathematics as a tool for professional work of logistics,
- understanding and application of mathematics for investigations of the effectiveness of logistics systems,
- ability to select and to employ the methods of descriptive statistics for investigations of the structure of economic and logistics phenomena,
- understanding and application of the methods of mathematical statistics for statistical inference,
- proper interpretation of the world, the organization and its environment,
- understanding of relationships and interdependence between the knowledge of logistics and knowledge of organization and management,
- modelling of the systems and identification of their parameters,
- solving technical problems based on the laws of physics,
- understanding of the essence of economics as well as micro- and macroeconomic problems.”

All those skills and competences will be used in a knowledge-based society and will be able to work towards building a career in a given field if they are compatible with soft competences. This will enable their commercialization in the process of sharing knowledge and ability to use the knowledge of other members of the organization in which they are strengthened.) to live in a changing environment. (“The authors present the results of study on the competences required for logistics jobs in enterprises. The logistics jobs in enterprises should realize various tasks. In addition, there are many other jobs where logistics functions are worked out, so investigations are necessary to establish what kind of competences are preferred by employers for such jobs.”). [7, 8]

This requires equipping man with universal and flexible civilization competences such as ability to accept novelties, innovativeness, openness. Currently, modern education is promoted, one that rejects old, fossilized methods of teaching. And one of the more modern but also very effective methods has become coaching. According to ICC's definition:

“Coaching is a process whose main goal is to enhance the Client and support Him in independent achievement of the intended change (based on his own discoveries, conclusions and resources)”. [9]

Characteristic features of the coaching process make it stand out against other methods, as they engage the coach (who conducts the process) and the coachee (client, process moderator). Additionally, they need to meet certain assumptions in order to follow certain principles:

1. Voluntarism – it assumes initiative on the part of the client, his will to join in the process;
2. It doesn't teach – it helps to learn (opposite to mentoring) – it uses human potential to fully develop soft competences;
3. It is based on questions, tasks and tools initiating coachee's activity;
4. It sets goals, affects self-motivation to change, it is closed in a given time limit from setting a goal to its achievement;
5. Man is the subject of activity and the process takes place in a partnership with respect to principles, beliefs and opinions.
6. The relation is based on trust;
7. Coachee takes full responsibility for using the resources, their choice and the level of activeness that he engages in the process;
8. The choice of goal depends on the client but the coach cares for ecology and health so that it results from respect and care for generally accepted principles.

Requirements for persons that become Coaches are at the same time a model for others for developing soft skills. One of the requirements is identification with values such as: love (agape), humility, respect, righteousness, honesty, coherence, authenticity, confidentiality, acumen, responsibility, flexibility, patience and distance. All those values build up a knowledge-based society and directly affect social skills. How well a given feature is used depends on man and his needs.

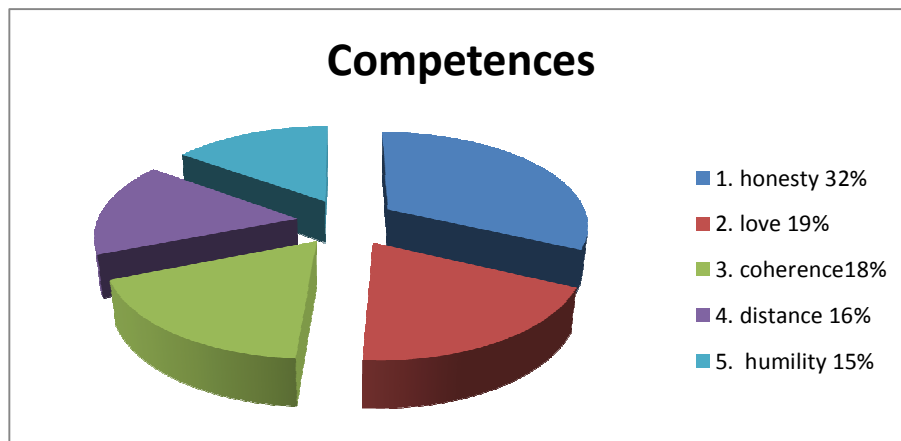


Figure 2. Exemplary pie chart of selected competences

Source: prepared by the authors

It is important that the approach to man be holistic, that it comprise a full unitary picture and not selected functions, because then there is a danger of selective adoption of assumptions for one's change. And although it seems that in the coaching process we are working on a specific goal, selected from among many various aspects of life, its influence on various spheres is unquestionable and should be taken into consideration.

Coaching as a way of effective personal development

Currently, coaching is getting to be the priority to improve the effectiveness of management in business units and self management. The method come from sport, exactly from tennis and was described in a book written by T. Galloway [10]. On base of the book new mechanisms were started to be created to release the potential of employee, sportsman as well as the other persons. It was surprising that people trained in the same way and the same numbers of trainings and experience, only some of them win, exceptional ones. It is similar in companies where personal success is treated at the same way. These differences come from internal attitude, ability to use personal potential and one's awareness. That is why using part in diagnosis by participants give us a picture, according to the study The Two World Report that self awareness and sense of confidence are problems in achieving professional goals in 84% and the same option for employers it is score of 71%. There is an exception matching in a presentation the same research features.

Confidence, one's awareness, attitude and abilities in reaction in difficult situations it is a set of competences being the background for answers: who I am and what I want to do in life. Matching passion with abilities to keep economical influence on level of satisfaction as well as on confidence and belief in human abilities. There is a set in which human life was equipped. It depends on the style

of growing up, peers group, celebrities met in our life and openness ourselves for managing own life in a very conscious way. And what could coaching change here? In a similar way like in sportsmen life the coach is needed in many fields to know oneself. He helps us to present by different methods our personal potential, reach to personal qualities these strong and weak points to find the sense of life also professional life and having such knowledge to build permanent set of deep confidence. The value of confidence will be worthy during the whole life. Being prepared for changes, looking for solutions related to needs of labour market and fitting to the requirements give us the stabilization in economics. Development of work competence it is only the part of needs realised by employers, achieving new skills such as: computer programe operating, machines service e.t.c . It is a little range from the set of work needs. New dimension have immeasurable competences, not proven, not giving effects in one task or service. It reality it is trying to measure social competences by certificates, diplomas, nevertheless their proper dimension of usefulness is observed in longer time as an timeless effect, something what can described as an atmosphere at work, approach to task, quality of effectiveness. Human action is still measure in many places by intuition, certificates are only the first step to get the job interviews, but the deciding factor it is often intuition, quality of approach of taking tasks, approach with a smile or without on a face.

Being surprised by the fact that so many people present a lack of confidence as their problem according to the study “Two World Report”, but in the question about approach for optimistic approach was 42% respondents for, but pesimistic approach was 16%. It seems to be that the factor of optimism has an influence on a level of skills fitting both competences and using them in personal and professional development.

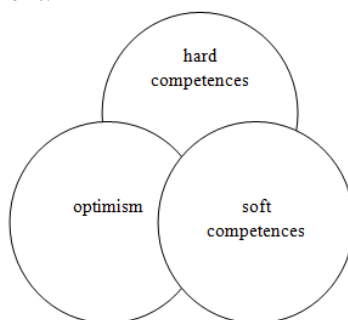


Figure 3. Influence of optimism, hard and soft competences on self confidence.

Source: prepared by the authors

Permeating any factors, skills build self -confidence what was shown as an example in figure3. Fact that there is a correlation only depends , a little or much, on self awareness and completing competences. External knowledge is required by using hard competences. During internal work soft competences are correlated but optimism realises attitude to life our personality and world.

Common field it is confidence measurable in own dimension, but also being felt by others. Proper technics in individual work and team work let us achieve abilities of self management and three features should be in harmony and correlate to each other harmoniously.

Summary

Summing up, knowledge-based society makes individuals take the decision on continuous upgrading of one's professional qualifications. For career development today it is necessary to have self-awareness and to develop personality skills known as soft skills. In this way personal development of man conditions his professional development in a knowledge-based society.

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ROZWÓJ OSOBISTY I ZAWODOWY JAKO WARTOŚĆ W SPOŁECZEŃSTWIE OPARTYM NA WIEDZY

Streszczenie: Artykuł dotyczy rozwoju społeczeństwa opartego na wiedzy. Wykorzystuje wiedzę nowoczesnej psychologii, między innymi Coachingu w budowaniu wartości zawodowej i osobistej na rynku pracy. Następnie pokazuje jak ta wiedza wpływa na sam rynek pracy.

Słowa kluczowe: rozwój osobisty, rozwój zawodowy, społeczeństwo oparte na wiedzy, coaching, kompetencje miękkie

作为一个以知识为基础的社会中的一个值的个人和职业发展

摘要： 本文认为现代的自我管理方法，它还提出了辅导个人和专业生活，影响发展的一个以知识为基础的社会中的利益。

关键词： 个人发展、专业发展、以知识为基础的社会、教练、软技能。