Ways of Successful Training and the Development of Competence

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Many modern management theories and researches seek those personal features and traits that should ensure an efficient development of the individual's competence. In our research we have found out that managers are able to develop top quality management and competence irrespectively of their personal traits. Since there is not a uniform method explaining how individuals should develop their competence, we present in detail how an individual training programme and the development of competence should proceed. However, we can only attain optimal success if we take into consideration individual features of a person and the requirements of his/her working environment. The dynamic and variable working environment expects from a modern leader a wide range of good or even perfect competence. The article at hand presents the importance of a systematic long-term basis training that has an influence on the improvement of management techniques.

INTRODUCTION

A leader in a modern company has, for quite some time now, not only played the role of a manager and director of activities in the narrower sense of the word but has also become a person who makes sure that the people of whom he/she is made responsible are able to reach and maintain an optimal work performance. Therefore his/her interaction competences are gaining increasing importance. The changing conditions in the world of management have led to the situation where business knowledge, financial management, information technologies and other types of managerial expertise are generally accessible and commanded by the majority of managers or management teams in successful companies. It is their competence to distinguish successful leaders from unsuccessful ones. However, we do not have in mind the competences in the sense of the scope of their responsibilities but in the sense of their ability of applying their knowledge in solution solving. Svetlik (2001) lists five groups of competences:

1. *Methodological competences* constitute the ability to perform time

management and to make decisions, the knowledge to deliver solutions to problems, and communication skills.

2. *Social competences* are persuasive abilities, abilities to conduct negotiations, the ability to manage people.

3. *Standpoint-value competences* include the ability to establish values and positive standpoints.

4. *Learning competences* comprise the ability to learn, to assess what will bear crucial importance for an individual in the future, and to collect and process information.

5. *Specific work-related competences* are competences that distinguish one line of work from the other.

The world of modern management undoubtedly requires a new style of leadership and a new type of leader. The trend is shifting from a leadership characterized by delegating and assigning orders or instructions (reactive leadership) towards the agenda-driven leadership based upon the formation of a company's visions and goals as well as the mobilisation of its employees with their participation (Svetlik 1996). An important role in this process is also attributed to interactive leadership, rendering the leader into an instructor who learns together with his colleagues in the processes of problem solving and developing new projects (Rasmunsson 1992). Furthermore, according to Svetlik (1996) the focus of leaders' activities is shifting from 'hard' to 'soft' factors, such as organisational culture, knowledge, communication, motivation through work and career, and so forth.

Even though leadership researchers (Hickman 1990; Kotter 1988; Yukl 1994) believe that it is reasonable to consider management and leadership as two distinct roles, they at the same time deem inappropriate to view managers and leaders as two different types of people. While an individual may be both a leader and a manager, this does not necessarily mean that a good manager can also be a good leader. The key distinction between a manager and a leader was provided by Burns (1978). At that time, Burns was the author who first introduced a claim that the style of a leadership may be defined as transformational or transactional. To his opinion, both the leader and the led are in a position to offer each other certain advantages. Transformational leadership involves mutual encouragement of the leader and the led, the inclusion of the led into the processes of creating new visions and establishing the processes of continuous changes. This results in the changes that occur in both, the

leader and the led. Transactional leadership, on the other hand, involves a completely different process, since it is founded exclusively on a one-way influence that the leader has on the led. Burns' work bore a major influence on Bass. The latter claims that transformational leadership is that which has been subject to the most insightful research in the last decade (Bass 1998). The reasons for such an interest are most likely based on the findings that transformational leadership, in principle, delivers the greatest share of positive results (Barling et al. 1996).

With transformational leadership the leader stimulates the employees with ideals and values. He/she makes use of intrinsic motivation. Transformational leadership derives from four fundamental premises (Bass and Avolio 1993):

1. *Charisma:* the leader presents the vision and the meaning of the company's mission, instils pride, evokes respect and confidence.

2. *Inspiration:* motivates high expectations, makes use of symbols in effort-oriented guiding, expresses crucial intents in a simple manner.

3. *Intellectual stimulations:* develops creativity, rationality and systematic problem solving methods.

4. *Consideration of the interests of individual staff members:* invests personal interest in an individual's development, treats each individual as a respective personality, coaches, offers advice.

Transactional leadership is founded on contention between the leader and his/her subordinates concerning all kinds of material, personal, social and other advantages that an employee may benefit from; insofar they comply with the rules or requirements stipulated by their superior. The transactional leader makes use of extrinsic motivation, and complies with rules and regulations. The transactional leader's work is based on (Bass and Avolio 1993):

- *Rewarding:* negotiates rewards for accomplished tasks, promises rewards for future job performance, gives acknowledgements for achievements.

- *Leadership-by-exception (active):* monitors ongoing activities, looks for divergences from the rules and standards, makes decisions on corrective actions.

- *Leadership-by-exception (passive):* intervenes only if the set standards are not met.

- *'Laissez faire' leadership:* renounces the responsibility and avoids team-based decision-making.

Transformational leadership development programmes have proven to be very effective. Their purpose is to teach those techniques and methods of leadership that may be defined as transformational forms of leadership. The key conditions for an efficient functioning of learning models for transformational leadership relate to the appropriate feedback information. The employees improve their effectiveness if they can assess that their superiors apply those leadership techniques that may be classified as transformational. In order to achieve it we have to provide for an as much direct flow of information as possible on the manner of leadership and reactions thereto (Kelloway, Barling, and Helleur 2000).

IS IT POSSIBLE TO INFLUENCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCES?

Let us look at an example of competence development within the context of emotional intelligence. Among the authors dealing with and conducting research on this phenomenon there is a strong consensus that emotional intelligence may be developed through emotional competences (Goleman 1995; Steiner 1997; Höpfl and Linstead 1997; Cooper and Sawaf 1997, Martinez 1997). There is an enormous body of literature devoted exclusively to the development of emotional competences. Despite the indisputable fact that emotional competences are the easiest to learn in childhood and that this form of learning poses greater problems at later stages of life, it also cannot be denied that high quality programmes can bear significant influence on the development of emotional competences in the desired direction.

The researches conducted in management, sport and behavioural psychology show that competences may be enhanced, developed or acquired. In this case it is also necessary to take into account the fact that social and emotional learning differs from cognitive and technical learning. Therefore, this type of learning requires a different approach. Managers are aware that competences constitute an important herald of success in work; however, it is in their interest to know how to ensure that a maximum number of employees will develop their competences to the highest level possible. In order understand this improvement of competences, let us take a look at two types of learning.

There are two fundamental reasons as to why it is appropriate to strive for the on-the-job improvement of competences:

1. Competences constitute a crucial factor in work performance. The results obtained from various studies make it evident that more than two thirds of competences necessary for a successful job performance are determined by emotional competences.

2. A vast majority of adults involved or introduced in the working process do not have the appropriate competences that are required by more and more demanding working environments. A particularly acute problem is posed by the lack of motivation.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE TRAINING

With its root in the early 1950s, a training influencing the development of social skills is no novelty. The effectiveness of such a training has been proven by objective criteria (reducing absenteeism and increasing profit). Even greater, however, was the subjective perception of the changes that were measured by means of various questionnaires. The results have shown an improved level of self-assurance, heightened sensitivity to other people's problems, increased confidence, and so forth (Cherniss 2000).

Fig. 1 shows the plan and implementation of the process for the development of competences. The learning process comprises four key phases. Fig. 1 clearly demonstrates what approach has to be taken in education and competence training. The more defined the methodology, the easier is to follow the plan and the greater is the opportunity to succeed. The complexity of the scheme crucially relies on the essential differences between cognitive learning and competence learning.

Let us take a closer look at the phases within the entire process that influence the changes in organisations' competences. By applying the following rules it is possible to ensure an optimum systematic impact on the objectives concerning the development of employees' competences. Such guidelines can bear influence on the development of the widest scope of activities, including team work, leadership, conflict and stress management, as well as the enhancement of customer and buyer relations. The rules apply to the changes in an individual's behaviour; and due to their synergic effect they increase the chances of success, provided also that they are consistently implemented. The rules are grouped into the following four spheres of activities: preparation, training, maintenance and evaluation, with each of them being further subdivided (Cherniss and Goleman 1998).

Preparing for changes. The initial period, which is critical to the suc-

Preparing for changes   Training   Maintenance and transfer   Evaluation

Preparing for changes	Training	Maintenance and transfer	Evaluation
• Assessing organisational needs • Assessing individuals • Prudent feedback information • Free choice • Encouraging people to cooperate • Associating learning objectives with personal values • Managing expectations • Measuring willingness	• Building a positive relationship between trainers and participants • Ensuring participants' impact on the learning process • Setting clear objectives • Dividing objectives into manageable steps • Providing possibilities for practicing • Providing feedback information • Applying experimental methods • Encouraging insight • Preventing application of former behavioural patterns	• Encouraging the use of competence at work • Developing organisational culture that supports training and changes • Eliminating disturbing factors	

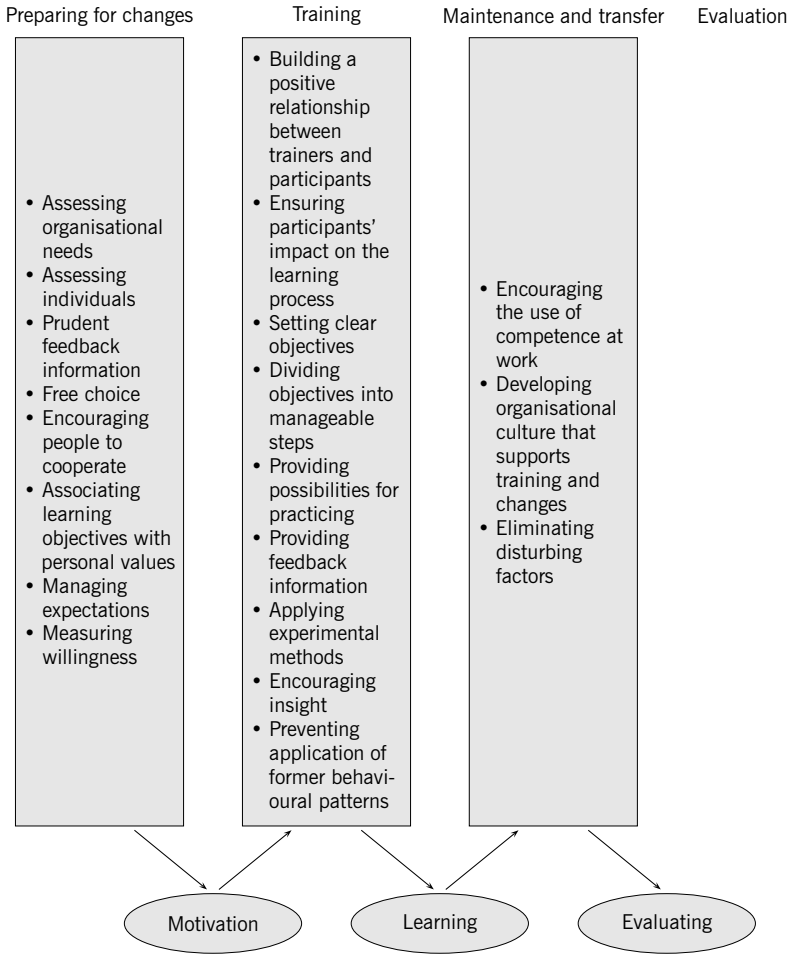Motivation   Learning   Evaluating

FIGURE 1   Optimum process for the development of competences in organisations
(Cherniss and Goleman 1998)

cess of the competence-developing process, comprises the preparations for changes. Preparations are implemented on both a personal and an organisational level. Motivation of participants is of key importance to the success of training. Generally, adult people have deep-rooted behavioural patterns. Altering these patterns constitutes a rather difficult task.

1. *Assessing organisational needs.* The planning of relevant activities may be implemented on the basis of a systematic study of the actual

state existing within a company in the area of competences. Subsequently, it is necessary to identify those competences that are vital for a good performance of work in a specific workplace. This procedure requires applicable methods and objective indicators which help us establish the actual state and determine the prospects. Similarly, it is necessary to establish whether the competences that need to be developed are in accordance with the organisational policy.

2. *Assessing individuals.* It is necessary to conduct an objective evaluation of individuals and determine the status of their competences. Subsequently, competences that should be altered during the training period are determined. Normally, people do not recognise which of their competences are weak and where changes should be introduced (Davies and Kraus 1997). People are reluctant to admit that some of their habits and behavioural patterns, respectively, hinder their efficiency in inter-personal relations with co-workers and clients.

3. *Prudent feedback information.* Individuals must be provided with feedback information on their advantageous characteristics and areas requiring the introduction of changes. Individuals should be made clearly aware of those areas that reasonably require changes. With a view to enabling individuals to internalise the aforementioned information, they should be given enough time and provided with an understanding and tolerant environment (Kolb, Winter, and Berlew 1968). Thus, the occurrence of disinclination and defensive posture is lessened.

4. *Free choice.* People are significantly more motivated when given free choice. To the extent possible, we should enable individuals to decide freely whether or not to participate in the development of emotional competences. Individuals should also have as important a role as possible in determining the objectives they want to realise in the course of training.

5. *Encouraging people to cooperate.* Organisational policy should constantly encourage people towards the development and constructive changes. Motivation is greater when employees trust the individuals who encourage them to improve their competences through training.

6. *Associating learning objectives with personal values.* People accept changes more readily when the said changes comply with their val-

ues. If changes are of little or no importance to people, the level of motivation for accepting them is rather low. People should be helped in understanding how these changes comply with aspects that are most important to them (Peterson 1996).

7. *Managing expectations.* Positive expectations should be established around the premise that the development of competences will progress in accordance with the planned objectives which will result in an improved efficiency of individuals. We must ensure, however, that the participants nurture realistic expectations. The self-confidence of individuals is of equal importance. As a rule, the training participants with greater self-confidence are more successful. People should also be instructed that they may realistically expect improvement in their competences, since quite a significant number of people refuse to believe that their competences can actually improve.

8. *Measuring willingness.* Measuring willingness to participate in emotional competences training represents a factor that has a significant impact on opting for the beginning of activities. If individuals should prove not ready due to a low level of motivation and other reasons, such grounds must be overcome with a view to increasing motivation.

Training includes all the activities which allow for the introduction of changes. The quantity of time, energy and potential fear of change invested by individuals during the period of training in competences is so abundant that it may bear a significant impact on reducing the motivation for changes. For this reason, the trainers must be aware of such obstacles all the time and actively contribute to the reduction of their negative impacts on motivation.

1. *Building a positive relationship between trainers[1] and participants.* In learning emotional competences, the relationship between the trainer and the participants plays an important role. The participants pay great attention to the emotional competences of trainers and are very sensitive to the latter trying to teach them what they themselves do not demonstrate. Kind, open and emphatic trainers are the most efficient in realising the changes. Therefore, the trainers who possess the aforementioned characteristics should be employed. However, we must also ensure that the trainers will display such characteristics during the training period (Ford 1978).

2. *Participants' impact on the learning process.* Learning is more effi-

cient when the participants have an actual impact on the learning programme and may adapt it to their own needs and circumstances. We should help them set their own objectives and train them in drawing-up a training programme which they will subsequently implement. Thus we train them for the ongoing implementation of changes in the period following the completion of their training.

3. *Setting clear objectives.* People must be made clearly aware of what the competences are, how they can be achieved and what impact they have on an efficient performance of work. Participants must be trained in such a manner so as to understand which competences are required for the attainment of specific objectives. Objectives must be clear and achievable, and must represent a sufficient challenge for the individuals.

4. *Dividing objectives into manageable steps.* The probability that the changes will occur will increase when several individual easily attainable objectives constitute the process of attaining the goal. The trainer must ensure that the objectives are achievable and anticipated changes manageable.

5. *Providing possibilities for practising.* If we want the changes that were realised during the training period to become permanent, they need to be applied in everyday real-life situations. The participants must be encouraged to apply the aforementioned changes in practice and report on their experience. Thus new habits are established which have a tendency to become rooted in the behavioural apparatus.

6. *Providing feedback information.* Feedback information encourages people and has an impact on changes. Normally, the participants cannot realistically evaluate the efficiency of new behavioural patterns, therefore they must be provided with a sufficient quantity of supportive feedback information. Co-workers, other training participants and all the individuals capable of following-up and perceiving positive changes should be integrated in the system.

7. *Applying experimental methods.* Active, definite and experimental methods are most efficient as regards training in emotional and social competences. These are: role-play simulation, group discussions, simulation of real-life situations and others. The participants will thus be integrated through their own emotional domain, since the emotions they experience in simulated situations are similar to those experienced in real life.

8. *Encouraging insight.* We must help the participants understand how

their thoughts, feelings and behaviour influence themselves and others. Such an insight functions as a natural link between situations, thoughts and feelings.

9. *Preventing the application of former behavioural patterns* constitutes an important task. When difficulties or failure occur, participants often yield to despair and rooted behavioural patterns. The feelings and uncertainty arising from failure represent important factors forcing individuals to reapply the disused behavioural patterns.

Maintenance and transfer relates to post-training phases and ensures that the acquired and trained competences will be transferred into all desired spheres of activities. When the training participant returns to his/her old working environment he/she will most likely encounter numerous factors that will encourage the application of those former behavioural patterns which the trainer has been trying to replace during the training process.

1. *Encouraging the use of competence at work.* The supervisors, co-workers and superiors should encourage the participants to use newly acquired competences at work, and inform them of the fact that not only do they notice the changes but that they also support them. As for the changes, the more they will be stimulated by the superiors and people whom the participant in question respects and appreciates the more stable they will become.

2. *Developing an organisational culture that supports training and changes.* The changes will evolve into a permanent value, provided that they occur in an environment that provides them support and stimulation. It is also equally important to provide the employees with the feeling of safety and acceptance.

3. *Eliminating disturbing factors.* During the course of the learning process and the subsequent period there may occur various interfering factors in the social environment which prevent the acquired knowledge and skills to be strengthened and translated into everyday practice. The disturbing factors may be inappropriate remarks made by co-workers, various failures and so forth.

Evaluation[2] must at all times be an inherent part of the training process, since it is only in this way that the effectiveness of performed activities can be measured.

1. *Evaluating.* In order to establish whether the development bears a long-term effect we need to measure it. Whenever possible, a

TABLE 1   Average age and number of senior staff members included in the research by gender, and their total values

	Average age	N
Women	40.08	10
Men	44.03	30
Total	43.22	40

method should be selected to assess and measure the changes and their effect on performance. It is recommended to assess the state of affairs immediately before and after the training process and a few months later. It is also advisable to make an assessment in one year's time. The evaluation should include the influence that the changes have on a widest possible scope of activities, perhaps even on the absenteeism, the level of satisfaction and other indicators of working as well as organisational climate. Nevertheless, the evaluation may also bring us to the conclusion that the planning and implementation of the training process have not proven effective (Cherniss and Goleman 1998).

RESEARCH

The research was conducted on the sample of 40 managers and 154 persons who assessed the competences of the participating managers. The article at hand will focus on the managers, their personality traits and emotional competence.

Let us first take a look at the tables containing basic socio-demographic variables for managerial staff. Since the number is below 100 we did not calculate percentage values but we were able to apply classic statistical procedures, since on the other hand we had a group of 154 assessors. Their socio-demographic data were not statistically processed due to the fact that an appreciable number of participants wished to remain anonymous, as far as their name and other personal data are concerned. Their wish was, of course, respected.

The results obtained from the Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) show average values for fundamental personality traits. Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire is the most frequently used and quoted personality questionnaire in psychological practice.

Table 2 compares the difference between the results obtained from our sample and the standardised results obtained from the Slovenian

TABLE 2 Average values for our sample and standardised results obtained from a sample of Slovenian population that was subject to subtests contained in the Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire for managerial staff

	Average value – our sample	Average value – standardised result
EPQ P	5.45	4.27
EPQ E	16.55	15.84
EPQ N	7.28	5.05
EPQ L	10.50	13.84

population sample. What can be noticed is that there is no significant difference between the results obtained from the first two subtests and the standardised results. Slightly higher are the levels of psychoticism (P) (amounting a little more than one point) and extraversion (E); the neuroticism/emotional stability (N) dimension exhibits an average result that is higher by two points; a little more than three points lower is the result on the sincerity scale (L).

The results show that the levels of psychoticism are somewhat lower on the national scale. With regard to the fact that the psychoticism dimension at the higher end of the continuum is determined by the characteristics of aggression, tough-mindedness, inconsideration and so forth, we can claim that the slightly higher result obtained for the group of leaders does not come as a surprise. The characteristics of strictness in mutual relations are, as a rule, fairly desirable. A somewhat higher result on the P scale for managerial staff is expected and in agreement with the indications from relevant literature.

Typical characteristics of extraversion (E) are: talkativeness, outgoingness, sociability, good communication skills and the ability to establish social contacts. The values for our sample exceeded standardised results but this too was expected. A good leader should have the communication skills which will enable him/her to effectively manage the social network. A good measure of extraversion will facilitate him/her to achieve this goal.

As regards the neuroticism/emotional stability dimension, the above-average result means a higher level of emotional instability or neuroticism. The people who attain an above-average number of points are restless, moody and easily anxious. This result serves as a warning that the managerial staff has to be provided with the knowledge and means to

help them tackle the major environment-induced stress factors. Since it is very difficult to bear influence on the working environment, the main effort should be invested in people. One of the methods to reduce the impact of a stressful environment is training for the purposes of a more efficient leadership that would ensure a higher quality fulfilment of needs and requirements. Or, in other words, stress constitutes nothing else than a very condensed series of unsatisfied needs (Glasser 1998).

Finally, there is also the sincerity dimension, which, according to Eysenck, does not constitute a real personality dimension, but a mere tool for measuring the tendency 'to pretend'. Measuring this personality characteristic is crucial when we wish to verify as to what extent an individual tends to opt for more socially acceptable answers[3] (i. e. tries to present himself/herself in a different light). According to Eysenck, the tendency to pretend is more evident in certain situations when a person in question wishes to make a better impression (for example, when filling out the questionnaire accompanying the employment interview). In addition to pretence, this scale also demonstrates the level of social naivety or conformism. The higher the result, the more explicitly expressed are the characteristics. On average, people included in our research achieved a result which was three points lower than the standardised result. This means that we are dealing with people who convey a typically lower tendency to pretend as well as a lower level of conformism. For senior managers such a result is as much expected as it is desirable.

In conducting our research we used the EPQ with a view to establish whether the personality characteristics were in correlation with emotional competence.

The Association between Personality Traits and Emotional Competence

This part of the task will deliver answers to the questions of our research. We will establish in what way emotional competences are associated with personality traits and whether leaders with better evaluated emotional competences also work with subordinates who are more satisfied in terms of both their personal and organisation's needs. Thus we will be able to set up the foundations to confirm or reject the hypothesis on the association between emotional competences and personality traits.

Table 3 presents the calculated correlations between personality traits and the result from the personality questionnaire on emotional compe-

tences. As regards emotional competences and personality traits there are 80 calculated correlations, and 16 as regards the clusters of emotional competences and personality traits. According to Petz, in the event of a large number of calculated statistical values the amount of envisaged statistically characteristic correlations will depend on the height of the risk.[4] In our case, where we are dealing with 96 calculated correlations, we may confirm the 'zero hypothesis' when we do not obtain more than five statistically characteristic correlations. It is also important to emphasise that such conclusions can be drawn only when we deal with large numbers.

In reviewing the correlation matrix we conclude that among all calculated correlations there are three statistically characteristic correlations at the 5% risk level. The first is the correlation between the p dimension and organisational awareness, the second is the correlation between the e dimension and prudence, while the third is the correlation between the l scale and self-control. Because of a large number of calculated correlations we will accept the interpretation on accidental statistically characteristic correlations and will therefore not interpret these associations as substantial but accidental.

According to relevant literature on the topic, emotional competences are not deemed to be in correlation with personality traits (Mayer and Salovey 1993; Goleman 1995). The results of our research confirm these claims. We can conclude that personal characteristics merely constitute a specific potential that acquires its substantial validity in association with competences and behaviour. Personal characteristics do not bear influence on the level of the possibility that someone will develop a certain emotional competence. Therefore, even though we can find differences in personal characteristics between 'normal'[5] population and managers, these characteristics do not constitute a factor that is crucial for a successful leadership.

CONCLUSION

Our presupposition was that there is no statistically characteristic correlation between emotional competences and personality traits. The results of our research proved this hypothesis. Our conclusions are consistent with the literature in the field which confirms that emotional intelligence does not depend on fundamental personality traits (Mayer, Caruso and Salovey 2000). How can we then apply the acquired knowledge for a better understanding of leadership?

We often look for differences between successful and unsuccessful

TABLE 3 Correlations between personality traits in the EPQ questionnaire and emotional competences in the ECI questionnaire

	EPQ P		EPQ E		EPQ N		EPQ L	
	r	p	r	p	r	p	r	p
Self-acknowledgement	−0.01	0.962	0.06	0.723	0.00	0.986	0.02	0.883
Emotional self-acknowledgement	0.13	0.438	0.22	0.191	0.03	0.867	0.08	0.620
Self-assessment	0.02	0.885	−0.04	0.798	−0.04	0.827	−0.10	0.536
Self-confidence	−0.07	0.679	0.04	0.813	0.02	0.891	0.06	0.707
Self-control	−0.07	0.663	−0.11	0.499	−0.06	0.739	0.17	0.307
Self-supervision	−0.06	0.740	−0.14	0.400	−0.08	0.630	0.32	0.048
Reliability	−0.09	0.608	0.04	0.813	−0.09	0.579	0.22	0.183
Prudence	−0.09	0.586	−0.35	0.034	0.05	0.755	−0.05	0.765
Adaptability	0.09	0.604	0.04	0.823	0.01	0.976	0.17	0.314
Achievement-orientedness	0.00	0.992	−0.08	0.612	−0.19	0.242	−0.01	0.953
Initiative	0.04	0.818	0.03	0.836	0.01	0.965	0.18	0.274
Social awareness	0.01	0.929	−0.04	0.818	−0.14	0.395	0.13	0.449
Empathy	0.03	0.879	0.02	0.918	−0.23	0.163	0.19	0.263
Obligingness	−0.16	0.329	−0.13	0.436	−0.03	0.844	−0.14	0.401
Organisational awareness	0.34	0.038*	0.02	0.908	0.03	0.844	0.20	0.231
Social skills	−0.10	0.549	−0.01	0.975	−0.20	0.224	0.09	0.595
Developing others	−0.07	0.664	−0.12	0.475	−0.09	0.574	0.00	0.995
Leadership	−0.18	0.283	−0.11	0.530	−0.05	0.755	−0.02	0.920
Influence	−0.02	0.901	0.08	0.651	−0.13	0.447	0.23	0.160
Communication	0.08	0.624	0.14	0.410	−0.09	0.584	−0.01	0.948
Fostering changes	−0.24	0.150	−0.17	0.299	−0.23	0.164	0.10	0.567
Conflict management	−0.03	0.867	0.02	0.928	−0.26	0.109	0.16	0.333
Establishing contacts	0.02	0.884	0.21	0.209	−0.08	0.615	0.13	0.447
Team work and cooperation	−0.14	0.387	−0.01	0.969	−0.23	0.158	0.02	0.918

$N = 38$; * statistically characteristic correlations with less than 5% risk.

people, and between successful and unsuccessful leaders. In a similar vein, we also wonder whether leaders possess specific personal quali-

ties that other people do not. Since an appreciable number of researches deliver affirmative answers to these questions, we tend to make over-generalised statements based on the conclusions that these personality traits and differences are crucial for a successful performance in leadership. But this is far from true.

How is an individual, without any psychological education and psychological questionnaires, able to establish the type of personality traits of the person with whom he/she is in a certain relationship? By observing his behaviour. Personality traits are thus expressed through an individual's behaviour. Behaviour may be effective or ineffective, socially more or less acceptable, or more or less appropriate. But it is always something that an individual has learnt (excluding instinctive and reflex behaviour). Personality and behaviour are interrelated only to the extent necessary to allow us to draw conclusions on the fundamental personality traits.

If we can define behaviour as good or bad, are we then, in a similar vein, also able to determine an individual's personality traits? No. Even though the general, non-professional opinion states otherwise, the quality of behaviour is completely independent from personality traits. The latter, more likely, constitute a potential. They represent the material that may be developed, through learning, into a certain type of personality which, in itself, cannot be deemed as good or bad.

Why did we claim that we can draw conclusions on personality traits on the basis of an individual's behaviour? Because the quantitative side of behaviour is, in fact, directly determined by personality traits. An individual who has achieved a high result on the E scale (extraversion) will, undoubtedly, be more talkative than an individual who has attained a lower result. However, the quality of their respective communication behaviours will be determined by factors that are completely different from their personality traits.

Personality is a relatively permanent system of an individual's behavioural, emotional and physical characteristics (Musek 1993). Personality potentials are genetically determined. The way in which an individual realises his/her personality potential, however, is not completely defined in his/her genetic system. At least as regards behaviour we can claim that it can be acquired through learning, can be subject to change or given up. Today we can also claim with certainty that it is also possible to improve competences that constitute a crucial factor for an individual's successful performance.

In principle each individual has to accept his/her personality as a po-

tential determining the quantity of his/her behaviour. The selected behaviour quality, conversely, will depend on other, situation-specific factors.

Competences are expressed through behaviour. We can conclude that leaders are able to develop a high quality form of behaviour and thus also high quality competences, irrespectively of their personality traits. Each individual has to be aware of his/her potentials and translate them into the best possible practice. However, there is no single recipe for all. Within the process of training in competences we will be able to deliver optimum results only if we take into consideration respective characteristics of each individual and the requirements posed by a specific working environment. Dynamic and variable working environments require from a modern leader a wide spectre of good or even perfect competences. It is only in this manner that a leader can play his/her role successfully and efficiently.

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NOTES

1 When training people in skills and competences, we should employ the term 'trainer', and not 'teacher', thus illustrating the real nature of learning. When educating people in cognitive contents, we employ the term 'teacher', while the specificity of the training in competences is accentuated by the term 'trainer'. This term means also that both the trainer and the attendants apply and verify the learnt competences in an environment where they are supposed to be applied.

2 Evaluation is a procedure used for the assessment of the current state or process. It does not present a critique, since it does not treat the personality traits of an individual but merely establishes the gap between the actual and the desired states.

3 The first three personal dimensions were proven by Eysenck and also by human physiology studies. Eysenck discovered physiological correlants that confirmed the existence of three key personality traits. The fourth dimension is a type of tool that helps us determine the level of reliability of the results obtained with regard to the first three scales. If the result on the L scale is too high (above 17 points) great care should be taken in interpreting the remaining three dimensions.

4 In adopting conclusions with a 5% risk, there is a possiblitiy to accidentally obtain five statistically characteristic correlations in 100 calculated correlations. In accepting a 1% risk, we would most probably accidentally obtain one statistically characteristic correlation.

5 In statistical terms, the word 'normal' means normal distribution.

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