
Identifying conditions to promote organisational coaching in Latvia and Lithuania

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Abstract

The present paper reports the findings of the first study of the research on identification of conditions that promote organisational coaching in Latvia and Lithuania. The aim of this study is to reveal the conditions that are expected to promote coaching in organisations based on coaches’ perceptions. The paper investigates favourable and unfavourable conditions typical for Latvia and Lithuania. The main method of study is a semi-structured interview, at the same time traditional scientific methods of comparison, analysis, induction, deduction and scientific methods of working with empirical data are used. The results obtained in the study are compared with the findings of theoretical and empirical literature review. Having established predominant conditions, practical implications were discussed. The paper also discusses the integration of coaching with other HR initiatives.

Keywords: Organisational coaching; human resource management; social capital.

1. Introduction

Coaching, in spite of its focus on a single client, is essentially an organisational intervention (Haan, Culpin, & Curd, 2009). Coaching promotes desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of both individuals and organisations (Cox, Bachkirova & Clutterbuck, 2011).

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There is proof in evidence based literature that coaching positively impacts on organisational performance. Coaching is generally associated with an increase in performance, it also influences employee’s job commitment by reinforcing self-esteem and personal performance, by helping to identify and value opportunities for learning and by clarifying and strengthening their career opportunities (Clutterbuck, 2009). Berg and Karlsen (Berg & Karlsen, 2011) showed that with the help of coaching managers will create new insight, develop new knowledge and skills, gain new insight into the key capabilities necessary to achieve the desired results.

Although it is generally accepted today that coaching is a valuable tool for improvement of organisational performance, coaching is still a relatively new professional field in Latvia and Lithuania. The interest in coaching among organizations is growing; this is proved by the increasing number of leaders and managers participating in different coaching events. Coaching in Latvia and Lithuania is viewed from different perspectives – as means of achieving one’s individual goals, business targets, implementing change management, etc. In Latvia around three hundred people have finished International Coach Federation (ICF) accredited programmes. However, the analysis of the current state of affairs in the field of coaching in Latvia and Lithuania reveals that, in spite of the growing interest information on coaching is not widely spread and the concept of coaching is not fully understood.

Therefore, the aim of the research is to identify the conditions that facilitate the promotion of coaching in the organizations of Latvia and Lithuania.

2. Method

To achieve the aim and determine the conditions that promote coaching in organisations, the research comprises of three studies. The first study: the investigation of the coaches’ perceptions of benefits and challenges of coaching in organisations, and the reasons of insufficient implementation of coaching in the organisations of Latvia and Lithuania. The second study: the investigation of clients’ perceptions of effectiveness of coaching engagement to improve performance at individual and organisational levels in organisations of Latvia and Lithuania. The third study: examination of current state of affairs in the field of coaching in Latvia and Lithuania and facts that can influence the promotion of coaching. The findings of the studies are used to identify the conditions that are grouped under the specified categories. The results obtained in the research are compared with the findings of theoretical and empirical literature review.

The preset paper reports the findings of the first study of the research. The aim of this study is to reveal the conditions that are expected to promote coaching in organisations based on coaches’ perceptions. The research question – what conditions of coaching promotion can be identified based on coaches’ experience and perception of implementation of coaching in organisation?

For the needs of the present study, it was decided to adopt phenomenological approach that involved in-depth semi-structured online interview. The interviews were carried out online in the period September – December 2013. The respondents were 9 coaches: 4 of them were from Latvia, 3 coaches were from Lithuania and 2 coaches were from other countries: Poland and Germany. The choice of respondents was stipulated by their qualification and experience. All coaches are certified and have experience in executive and/or organisational coaching and present the most active part of coaching community.

Pre-prepared and tested interview questions were grouped around three themes: key benefits of coaching for individuals and organisations; challenges in the implementation of coaching organisations; the future of coaching in Latvia / Lithuania. To achieve credibility of the results the interview finalizes with the questions to get feedback on the issues discussed and add anything else the interviewee wish to discuss. The respondents’ answers were recorded and transcribed for the further thematic analyses. The aim of the thematic analysis was to identify the conditions that promote coaching in organisations based on coaches’ experience and perception. The analysis is culminated with thematic grouping of conditions. Simultaneously traditional scientific methods of comparison, analysis, induction, deduction and scientific methods of working with empirical data were used.

3. Results

Analyzing interview data, it was discovered the convergence of opinions of coaches. Coaching is considered as beneficial to organisations in terms of greater goal clarity, better alignment with the role in the organisation. For
individuals, coaching gives new possibilities for development. After coaching program person is more capable to organize his own thinking process more clearly and structurally. There are also a lot of advantages for organisations, the main thing which coaching does is change in relationships between managers and employees, people are becoming more open and more patient to different views. This change is positively reflects on employees’ and managers’ performance. However, there is a lot of misunderstanding what happens around the coaching. It is difficult to explain how effective coaching can be, this is mostly because coaching is not a homogeneous, it comes from different methodologies. To be effective, first of all, coaching has to be supported at the top level of organisation. Then, managers have to have long term training on that, it is not enough to go to coaching training for two days.

By coaches’ opinion, in some years coaching in Latvia and Lithuania will be more popular than now. However among the reasons why coaching is not so popular compared with Western Europe and America, coaches mentioned that on one side, people in Latvia and Lithuania do not usually trust other people who say that they can help and do not use some external help when they face some problems. Coaches from Lithuania also suggest that the people who brought the idea of coaching in Lithuania caused a lot of mixture and misunderstanding.

**4. Discussion/Conclusion**

This paper presented the findings of the first study of the research on identification of conditions that flavour the promotion of coaching in organisations of Latvia and Lithuania. Coaches’ perceptions of benefits and challenges of coaching in organisations, as well as the reasons of insufficient implementation of coaching in the organisations of Latvia and Lithuania, were summarized and two large groups of conditions were defined: external social conditions and internal organisational conditions.

Based on coaches’ perceptions, in order to promote coaching in organisations of Latvia and Lithuania the following social conditions have to be fulfilled: people are aware of and have positive attitude to coaching; coaches constantly enhance their qualification and provide coaching of high quality.

The following organisational conditions have to be fulfilled to facilitate the promotion of organisational coaching in Latvia and Lithuania:

- top level managers support coaching engagement at all levels;
- coaching engagement is aligned with organisation’s learning and development strategy and grounded on needs assessment and focused on specific target groups: top level managers, middle level managers, high potential employees;
- coaching is linked to employee development process by provision of different types of coaching programmes: periodical or occasional when a person needs it;
- the impact of coaching is measured at individual and organisational levels.

There are some limitations, the study is based on analysis of small number of coaches’ responses. However, taking into consideration the limited number of certificated coaches with relatively long experience in executive and/or organisational coaching in Latvia and Lithuania, the findings of this study are able to accept as initial. These findings will be verified and supplemented by the further stages of research.

**References**


