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Peculiarities of manifestation of coaching in organisations

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Abstract

Drawing on the established theories, the paper examines manifestations of coaching in organisations. Peer reviewed articles were analysed to determine the theories that provide the framework for the study of coaching in organisations. A questionnaire was developed specifically for coaches to find out their opinion about the manifestation of coaching in organisations. Skype interviews were conducted with coaches who willingly agreed to participate. The data obtained by means of literature review and the opinions of the interviewed coaches were analysed and compared. Having established the agreement of results of the review and the survey, practical implications were discussed.

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1. Introduction

Organisations operate in a rapidly changing business and technological environment; therefore, they should constantly develop in order to achieve sustainability. Organisations need to find new ways to help employees become aware of the need for change and encourage them to take more responsibility for their development and growth. Coaching focusing on the development of self-awareness and potential inspires desirable and sustainable change of both individuals and organisations. Although it is generally understood today that coaching is a valuable tool, there is no accepted unified view on how to effectively implement coaching in organisations. According to Cox, one of the problems with coaching, which is underpinned in the research, is that it is 'notably sparse' (Cox, 2013).

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This paper aims to investigate the peculiarities of manifestation of coaching in organisations based on the comparison of the results of the analysis of current research topics in coaching reported in peer-reviewed journal articles with the results of the questionnaire and interview.

The implementation of coaching in organisations and the current state of affairs in the field of coaching in Latvia are briefly outlined. The paper focuses on the analysis of peer-reviewed journal articles and comparison of the findings with the results of the questionnaire and interview. A 24-item questionnaire was developed specifically for coaches to find out their opinion about the implementation of coaching in organisations. Skype interviews were conducted with coaches who willingly agreed to participate. 15 coaches from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany took part in the online survey, 10 of them agreed to participate in Skype interviews. The results and practical implications are discussed in the present paper.

This paper is the first author's attempt to examine the topic from an evidence-based perspective to understand the unique power and effectiveness of coaching. Investigation of the manifestations of coaching at organisational level provides the basis for further research on the implementation of coaching procedures aimed at the improvement of performance efficiency of organisations in Latvia.

1.1. Implementation of coaching in organisations

Most countries are undergoing a transition towards a knowledge economy based largely on the efficient management of human resources (Baron & Morin, 2010). However, the impact of social and economic changes has made many organisations increasingly unstable (Stokes & Jolly, 2011). Organisations experience frequent changes such as mergers and acquisitions, changes in management philosophies, introduction of new forms of work organization as well as methods used in managing the performance of employees. These changes have allowed employees to work in a more self-directed manner, providing greater autonomy and, in many cases employees have to develop new leadership and management skills. Moreover, executives and managers today have to work under conditions of unprecedented organizational change and complexity. Whether their focus is on bottom-line results, cost reductions, globalization, IT or environmental issues, the pressures are enormous (Berg & Karlsen, 2011).

Coaching promotes desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of both individuals and organisations (Cox, Bachkirova & Clutterbuck, 2011). Apart from individual and team development, coaching can add value by facilitating organisational development (Rosinski, 2011). Coaching can help organisations identify the mechanisms to achieve growth that is best suited to their unique circumstances.

Coaching has become essential for leadership development. Leaders constantly need to develop new skills to reflect on the increasing pressure of rapidly changing and highly competitive environment (Stokes & Jolly, 2011).

Coaching is an increasingly popular tool of management development. In response to the unstable factors of business environment, organisations place a greater emphasis on development activities for employees. Development is not only seen as a remedial attention, but it also started to be seen as a way of retaining the best staff (Stokes & Jolly, 2011). Coaching is generally associated with 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).

Coaching is also very beneficial for individuals. Changes make employees become more responsible for their personal and professional development. They need to develop certain skills to better manage themselves by improving their own performance through their own efforts and will (Stokes & Jolly, 2011). Coaching provides a greater clarity about individual's personal development, about how they are actually performing and what prevents them from achieving more (Clutterbuck, 2009). Managers can also benefit from acting as a coach. They can get better understanding about what really happens in the work process, at the same time, they can receive a more honest feedback about their own management style and behaviour (Clutterbuck, 2009). This helps managers strengthen the relationships with their subordinates. However, there is a real challenge in combining these two roles, 'a manager' and 'a coach'. Ellinger *et al.* mention that lack of time and the need to apply specific skills and capabilities to coach discourage managers from coaching (Ellinger, Beattie, & Halmin, 2011).

Although coaching has become incredibly popular, there is still a lot of uncertainty and vagueness regarding what coaching is really about. There is certainly no consensus on the definition of coaching (Ladyshevsky, 2010) and no agreed approach to the definition (Passmorea & Fillery-Travis, 2011).

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