

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

**FACULTY OF ECONOMICS, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
MANAGEMENT**



**BENEFITS OF EXECUTIVE COACHING FOR
PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL SELF-REALIZATION**

Dissertation

For the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the professional
field 3.7. Business Administration and Management, scientific specialty
"Business Administration"

Doctoral student: Zornitsa Georgieva Stefanova-Ivanova
Scientific supervisor: prof. d. ic. n. Prof. Dr. Zhelyu Vladimirov

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The thesis consists of an introduction, two chapters), a conclusion and a bibliography with a total of 215 pages. The text contains 33 figures, 23 tables, 3 graphs and 2 appendices. The literature cited includes 315 sources. Author's publications on the subject: 3. Reports on the subject: 5

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LIST OF TERMS USED

Coaching	A partnership relationship between client and coach that creates a space of trust, acceptance and respect. It evokes the client's naturalness, creativity and sincerity so that they can courageously be more of who they truly are
Coach	a professional who uses the coaching method to support clients in their development, growth and progress
Executive coaching	A peer relationship based on acceptance, understanding and respect in which the executive coach uses a variety of techniques and methods from psychology, management, mediation and others as applicable depending on his or her training to facilitate and support his or her client in his or her personal and professional development, thereby improving leadership style, teamwork and organizational performance.

INTRODUCTION

Humans have an inner need to develop and learn, to fulfil themselves in life by unlocking their full potential. Carl Jung and humanists such as Maslow and King Rogers call this process individuation, self-realization, autonomy, and "self-centeredness." As Maslow said, "What a man can be, he must be. This need we may call self-realization." (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970)

But very often we do not realize our potential. The individual price we pay is stress, burnout, sadness, resentment, anger, unhealthy relationships, deteriorating physical and mental health. On the other hand, the price that organizations pay is measured in billions of dollars lost due to lack of commitment, low productivity, systemic delays, high turnover, sick leave costs.

Over the last two decades, a new method of supporting leaders in their development has taken hold in the business world - executive coaching. Having gained prominence for its effectiveness in improving the performance of key figures in organisations and their teams (initially in the US, Australia and Canada), executive coaching is now beginning to be actively used in many other countries. In the last ten years it has been increasingly used in our country.

So far, practice is outpacing theory and this paper aims to enrich the research base on what are the outcomes of executive coaching for leaders, their teams and organizations. The starting point for the research work is a holistic approach. In this sense, it explores how executive coaching can be used for the personal and professional self-realization of leaders.

Relevance of the topic

The last two years of the coliform pandemic have contributed to extremely high levels of stress and uncertainty. 2020 has officially become the most stressful year in recent human history (Gallup 2022). And this built on top of an extremely dynamic transformation towards globalization, which is associated with the transfer of huge databases, with the automation and robotization of professions and entire sectors of the economy (UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2022). Work and life in general after 2021 will probably never be the same as before. The new normal now includes telecommuting, working from home, working in multicultural and multinational teams, flexible schedules, remote management, online learning, and developing people and teams. The rapid development of new technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), the highly dynamic evolution of the sciences, the increasing

penetration of the sciences into one another, and the development of new, specialized knowledge and its intrusion into people's daily lives have made it virtually impossible for most organizations and individuals to adapt to these rates of development, much less adjust their minds to them. Digital reality is giving birth to a new human species. Tatiana Chernigovskaya calls it Homo Confusus, or "confused man" (Chernigovskaya 2020).

Corporations are recognizing the importance of the well-being of their employees (even their families) and many multinational corporations like Google, Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Netflix are creating programs to develop a new type of leader so that these leaders can care for employees in a new way. But that doesn't change the facts of the moment: workers are experiencing extreme challenges related to job insecurity, job loss, increased workload, death of loved ones, lack of social contact, lack of childcare, lack of opportunities for career growth, lack of mental and physical health. Developing this new type of leader, with a different and new mindset, requires very individualized programs. As an essential part of new leader development programs is executive coaching, an individualized, tailored process for each leader. It supports leaders by providing them with contexts and experiences through which the person can move to a new level of awareness of their goals and focus.

Such ideas about each person's individual needs are part of Abraham Maslow's theorizing about higher human needs (Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* 1971). It is the primal desire of every person to realize their full potential, both personally and professionally. This is why coaching as a method is so well suited to individualized work. The existence of neuroplasticity (M. Merzenich 2018) also known as brain plasticity, which refers to the brain's ability to change continuously throughout an individual's lifetime as the mature (as well as immature) brain is constantly reorganizing itself, here and now, supporting all kinds of learning, gives reason to suggest that coaching can influence leaders to change their attitudes, patterns, beliefs, actions, and perceptions. According to Carl Rogers, the effective learning and development of great leaders occurs in the context of their own strategic, economic, intellectual and emotional agenda (Rogers, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* 1957). And when these conditions (experiential learning) are created through coaching, then there is deep, constructive, meaningful learning that is beyond mere knowledge acquisition. This type of transformational learning supports people to think critically and live meaningfully (Mezirow, *Perspective Transformation* 1977). It is also a change of so-called meaning perspective, which is both the basis and outcome of executive coaching.

In the present work, an instrument (questionnaire) is created and validated to test such perspective changes as, but not limited to, caring and acceptance of self and others, feeling more deeply connected to others and the world, clarity, meaning, and inner peace. And whether they are related to, but not limited to, job engagement and satisfaction, improved financial performance of the organization, increased customer satisfaction, better delegation, communication and giving feedback. It also tests whether coaching helps a leader improve their leadership style by coming face-to-face with their limitations and fears, working through them and facing themselves and the people they lead in the true light of who they are as a person - honest and accountable, authentic and confident. In a growing number of multinational corporations, leaders are being trained in coaching skills so that the entire culture in organizations can turn toward employees and each one can grow and develop in a way that is tailored to their own needs. It's no coincidence that in a January 2022 interview. Ruth Porath, CFO of Alphabet and Google, says that the benefit in her career has been that coaching has started to informally be present in all her meetings and cover all the points that are discussed (Porat 2022). As a third level of influence with the tool created, the impact of executive coaching on organizational performance is tested.

Dozens of studies over the past 15 - 20 years, almost all qualitative, have related to the ways in which executive coaching affects the psychological capital and creativity of colleagues and partners (Rego 2012), leading to more committed and stronger teams (Vitoria 2012), on the performance of "followers" in extreme circumstances (S. W. Peterson 2011), to serving others and creating group cohesion and satisfaction (Diddams 2012), to more trust in management (C. S. Burke 2007). But what has not been explored, at least in the material accessed by the author, is how personal development from coaching affects several levels of leaders' fulfilment, namely their career development, their management effectiveness, teamwork and, ultimately, organisational performance. This research would be the contribution of this dissertation.

Aim and objectives of the thesis

The main purpose of this dissertation is to explore the extent to which executive coaching is useful for developing leaders' personal potential and how personal development influences effective management, career development, teamwork, and organizational performance.

This objective is specified in the following tasks:

1. Literature review

2. Developing a theoretical model of the impact of coaching on leaders' personal and professional self-realization
3. Compilation of questionnaire for data collection
4. Data processing and analysis
5. Conclusions

Research thesis

The thesis defended in this dissertation is that executive coaching influences the personal growth of leaders who have used the executive coaching method, and personal development influences effective management, career development, teamwork, and organizational performance.

Hypotheses

To achieve this goal, the following eight research hypotheses are tested:

- The process of executive coaching positively influences the personal growth of the leader (personal development)
- Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences the career development of the leader
- Effective management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences career development
- Effective management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences teamwork
- Effective management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively affects organizational performance
- Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively impacts organizational performance
- Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences teamwork

- Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences effective management

Research methodology

It was decided to use a survey (correspondence) study to collect the empirical data. A survey (questionnaire) with 59 questions was designed to test the hypotheses. The development of the questionnaire was based on the theoretical base studied for the present study; personal observations in the author's work as a professional master coach with more than 12,500 hours of work with clients, over 65% of whom were leaders; interviews with 12 leaders who had used the executive coaching method, a case study of 7 leaders who had used executive coaching for their development and growth.

The survey was conducted online through a questionnaire that was distributed on Facebook and LinkedIn. 169 completed cards were returned from people who had used the coaching method. SPSS and JASP programs were used to process the results.

The fifty attributes are allocated to 5 factors: organizational performance benefits (OP), effective management (EM), teamwork (ET), personal development (PD), and career development (CD).

Structure of the dissertation

The dissertation begins with an introduction. Chapter one introduces coaching as a method and more specifically executive coaching, which is interaction with leaders and managers, and reviews the literature on the topic. Chapter two describes the research design and methodology, analyses the data, draws conclusions and makes recommendations. The work ends with a conclusion.

Chapter 1 EXECUTIVE COACHING : BASIC THEORIES AND CONCEPTS

We can consider coaching as a process for personal and professional development that involves structured and focused interaction and the use of strategies, methods and techniques to provoke desired and sustainable changes that benefit the client and other stakeholders (employer, family, team). It is therefore recognised as an effective tool for achieving specific outcomes, improving performance and personal effectiveness (Cox 2010) (R. Dilts, From Coach to Awakener 2003) (J. V. Segers, Structuring and Understanding the Coaching Industry: The Coaching Cube 2011). As the method has become more widely used in various industries, service industries, non-profit organizations, etc., and for different purposes and groups (e.g., coaching leaders, teams, parents, athletes), individuals with a variety of backgrounds, training, and professional experiences have begun to practice the coaching profession.

Coaching is a practical method and has intellectual roots in adult learning theory, social psychology, theories of personal and organizational development, humanistic philosophy, and many others. This provides enrichment but also creates difficulties in understanding the coaching industry and in selecting an appropriate coach (Cox 2010).

In this chapter, we will review and summarize the context of the research, coaching as a method, and executive coaching as a specific approach to personal and professional development of leaders. We will review the literature on executive coaching and formulate the research hypotheses.

1.1 Context of the study. New leaders.

The timing of the study is interesting. Because of the cohort pandemic, we have dynamically moved to a new kind of work, part of which is working remotely, in virtual teams, with increased levels of stress and burnout, with opportunities to work in unfamiliar cultural and social environments, in which technology has taken centre stage. All this at a time of a "disruptive" economic crisis, which the World Bank admits is at risk of becoming a global recession in 2023 (The World Bank 2022). New ways of thinking and acting are required of business leaders and new demands are being placed on them, which we will discuss in this section.

1.1.1 The industry for developing leaders and managers

Leadership training is a global industry valued at over \$370 billion in 2019 (TrainingIndustry.com 2020). 95% of training organizations plan to either increase or maintain their current investment in developing their leaders (Prokopeak 2018). A survey of over 9,400 HR and business leaders shows that over 85% believe there are unique and new demands on 21st century leaders, driven by more complexity and ambiguity and new working practices and technologies.

Despite this, less than 10% think their leadership development programs are currently effective or very effective at preparing leaders to successfully navigate the digital economy. Only 28% of organizations rate themselves as effective or very effective at building the necessary qualities in their leaders (Deloitte 2020).

As a rule, what is done in most organizations where there is a budget for leadership development (and this is not something typical for Bulgarian organizations in recent years), is that most often the organization offers a "Leadership Academy", which may include one or several trainings selected by the HR manager. Generally, these short trainings are not tailored to the individual needs of each person. After this quick process, whether it is called an academy, boot camp, or leadership program, usually if leaders are tracked at all, it is in the form of 360 degree assessments or some sporadic surveys. Their long-term development and putting into practice their renewed or newly acquired knowledge, skills, mindsets, behaviors, beliefs and goals are not monitored. The costs of these activities globally are enormous. In a survey of 28,000 business leaders, the Chief Learning Officers Business Intelligence Board reported that 94% of "learning organizations" plan to continue to invest and increase spending on learning and development for their leaders (Prokopeak 2018). There has been extremely ineffective management of budgets. At the same time, in the business world, the gaps between organizations that invest in developing their leaders and those that do not will become increasingly large. The same study shows that 8% of organizations invest over \$10,000 per year per person in development and as many as 68% invest under \$4,000 per year. The author has not come across any information on the state of business leader development in this country, but there are assumptions after talking to a number of HR directors that development budgets are many times lower (if any funds are allocated for this). In the above survey, the largest spend was on coaching (34%), followed by spending on developing communication skills (31%) and employee engagement (27%).

In organizations that are advanced in dealing with change, such as General Electric, Honeywell, Intel, management commitment to preparing leaders is very high and building leaders has been elevated to an organizational value. The process of developing leadership talent involves already established leaders developing and mentoring other leaders (Niemes 2002). However, in today's new business environment, this is not enough. LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner says in an interview with the Stanford Graduate School of Business that the ways in which **people are taught and trained skills** are outdated. They need to be **taught critical thinking, creative problem solving, collaboration and compassion** (Weiner 2017). She says that increasingly on LinkedIn, when hiring people, it is not just important to select those who have certain work experience and skills, but people who fit with the organization and its values. Then to continue to develop through coaching and mentoring and to be assessed against the values of the organisation.

Leadership development programmes need to transform to reflect life in the 1920s in the 21st century. We are experiencing a fourth industrial revolution. Globalization and technology are infiltrating every process in our work and our lives, there are new norms for work, and leader development programs typically haven't changed much from 10 or 15 years ago. Development of key figures in organizations is still understood as the development of a skill or quality. Interventions are one-off, sporadic at best. The leader is relied upon to have participated in a few training sessions and to have transformed themselves as needed for the role they are performing. But learning and development in humans does not work that way. HR directors therefore need to look at leader learning and development in a new way that reflects contemporary realities. They need to recognize that the worldview and mindset shifts needed to make transformational changes in individuals require time, focus, internal personal development work, and resources - time, finances, energy (Reeves 1999).

To move on and not only cope with the radical changes they face at work, but also to live up to their full human potential, leaders need a new way of working. They need to be more fully present in the here and now, more engaged, creative, focused, have a clear vision and goals, communicate naturally and sincerely, and ultimately be happier and more fulfilled. Paradoxically, these are their biggest challenges (Gallup 2019). We live in an environment and these are qualities that are unparalleled to date. Very few managers and leaders are prepared. In fact, the entire structure - individuals, teams, organizations, learning and development departments/organizations - associated with this change is challenged. The major companies

the author can cite as examples such as Deloitte, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Google, Amazon, Arple, Facebook, Netflix recognize the fact that 21st century leadership is different from anything we have learned and experienced before. Their executives are leaders¹. They learn and are curious, they invent and communicate (Amazon 2020); they are good coaches, they create inclusive team environments that show concern for the success and well-being of people on their teams, they communicate skillfully and support the development of others, they are productive and results-oriented (Google 2017).

Using IT terminology, we can say that it is important that leadership training and development is in a "constant beta" state (Kruse 2020). Beta waves are an electrical rhythm of the brain that is associated with a normal conscious waking state beta or beta rhythm. As we know, many processes in technology development are based on the workings of the human brain. In software product development, beta is the phase where the product already has all the features, but is likely to contain known or unknown bugs, slowed speed, and crashes and loss of information may occur. In beta, the product continues to be developed, new iterations are made to improve it, and feedback is often taken from users. "Flawlessness" is not sought or expected from the beginning of a product release, but improvements are welcomed with each successive iteration. This process, according to the author, describes quite accurately the way leaders need to develop. Their learning and development should be seen as a constant process of updating (update) and improving (upgrade) the brain. This is what neuroplasticity, mindful learning and transformational learning are all about (M. Merzenich 2018) (Mezirow, Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning 1991) (Mezirow, Perspective Transformation 1977).

In the last 15-20 years, coaching, and in particular executive coaching, has emerged on the scene of leadership development methods and is steadily gaining ground. (Kampa-Kokesch 2001) (Douglas 2000) (Wasylyshyn 2003) (Ely 2010). The growth of programs that use the coaching method, coaches and publications on the subject is incomparably greater than before. When searching the American Psychological Association website (American Psychological Association 2022), for the period 1991 - 2000 the combination "executive coaching"² gives as a result 25 mentions, for the period 2001 - 2010 the number has increased almost 15 times and gives already 372 number of mentions, and for the period 2011 - 2022 the number is already

¹ Therefore, from now on we will often use the terms manager and leader interchangeably, with the clear understanding that in many cases this is still more of a wish than a fact.

² In English executive coaching

830. While in the previous decades coaching was only mentioned in a sport context³, after 1991 it entered permanently into the business context.

It is no coincidence that coaching is the preferred method for personal and professional development of leaders. Executive coaching, compared to internal and external training of varying lengths, including workshops, trainings, MBA programs, e-learning, mentoring, on-the-job rotations, and training in nature, is chosen as the most workable method for changing certain leader behaviors and is the most widely accepted by both HR directors and leaders who use coaching as a method for their development, providing it with internal organizational support (Rekalde 2017).

1.1.2 Challenges for leaders

At the same time, although we have available and proven methods for effective manager and employee development, research shows that only 13% of employees worldwide are engaged at work (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). Only 14% of CEOs believe they have the leadership talent needed to execute their business strategies (Gleeson 2019). A PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) study of some 1,300 CEOs, managing in 40% of cases companies with a turnover of more than \$1 billion and in 35% of cases companies with a turnover between \$100 million and \$1 billion, showed that 38% of participants feared they did not have the key skills needed to lead the (PwC 2018). In another study, 61% of executives reported that they were not prepared for the strategic challenges they faced when they were appointed to senior leadership positions. 50%-60% of executives fail within the first 18 months of being promoted or hired (Carucci 2017).

Low self-confidence

Although development and the need for self-fulfilment are essential for the leader, very often he does not achieve them satisfactorily. What prevents a person from developing his potential are the limitations he has adopted and imposed on himself, the level of awareness and thinking he has at a given time. The only thing that stands between him and his desire for happiness, success, development and full self-realization in life is himself - his fears, limitations, beliefs and perceptions (Gallwey, The Inner Game of Tennis: The Classic Guide to the Mental Side of

³ In English, the term "coach" has been used primarily as "trainer" in sports. In our country, the term "coach" was also sometimes used originally. In the last few years it has been entirely replaced by the untranslatable term "coach".

Peak Performance 1997) (Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Work* 2000). A person's consistent self-limitation leads to insecurity, low self-esteem, low self-confidence, motivation and commitment and, ultimately, frustration and unhappiness (Gallup Inc. 2015).

The dictionary gives the following definition of self-confidence: confidence in oneself, one's knowledge and abilities, fearlessness, courage, determination (Bulgarian Language Institute 2000). In science, there is a lot of research on how self-confidence affects a person's psyche and physique. For example, Sheldon and Hanton observed in athletes that in the absence of self-confidence, the intensity of anxiety increases and attributed to factors external to the person that are beyond the person's control and interfere with performance (Hanton 2004). On the other hand, if self-confidence is high, the possibility of control is perceived positively and leads to interpretations that facilitate the process. Elite athletes have cognitive coping strategies in stressful situations such as mental drills, thought stopping and positive internal dialogue (Hidayat 2014) (Hanton 2004) which is both an opportunity and part of an intervention using coaching. Roland Benabou and Jean Tirole report that self-confidence improves motivation (Benabou 2002). Self-confidence promotes creativity, innovation and self-management (Phelan 2003).

A number of studies have shown a strong link between self-confidence and transformational leadership, i.e. the benefit to the leader themselves in the process of transformational leadership (Matzler 2015) (Galante 2017) (Hill 1977). Transformational leadership is viewed at four levels (Farnsworth 2020):

- Idealized influence (the manager/leader is the role model),
- Inspirational influence (the manager/leader motivates teams to commit to the organisations goals and visions),
- intellectual influence (the manager/leader encourages innovation and creativity by challenging the habitual beliefs or views of people in teams) and
- Individual influence (the manager/leader acts as a coach and/or advisor to the people in the teams). By knowing their people and taking into account the individual needs and characteristics of followers, leaders encourage them to achieve goals that are equally important to the person and the organization.

Practice shows that there are cases when an employee is promoted to manager, both he and the management expect that a short initial leadership training is enough (and not in all organizations) to turn the manager into a leader and the rest of the people in his team to follow

him and be motivated. (Gallup 2015). And, in fact, a certain managerial position simply means a title. In order to talk about transformational leadership it is necessary to be able to engage employees with the desire to change, to contribute and to lead because they feel valued. Transformational leaders develop their teams to higher levels of personal and professional growth, and in their work they contribute to meaningful change in their organizations and missions. Other research shows the link between self-confidence and benefits to organizations such as increased levels of engagement and job satisfaction (Elloy, The influence of superleader behaviors on organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational self-esteem in a self-managed work team 2005) (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018). A third body of research has shown links between leadership and increases in follower and team self-confidence, with the latter positively associated with increased organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and better performance (Kim 2015). We have reason to assume that increasing self-confidence through coaching as one method of leader development is positively associated with benefits at all levels in the organization: individual (for the leader), team, and organizational. However, self-confidence is one of the main qualities that leaders lack. For example, 32% of CEOs of U.S. organizations with between \$100 million and \$10 billion fear that they do not possess the qualities necessary to do their jobs (Gallup 2015). Self-confidence is a quality that leaders are looking to develop in themselves and is one of the main reasons to seek coaching (International Coaching Federation. 2013).

Do not take personal responsibility

Today's dynamic and challenging business conditions require managers to solve complex dilemmas. These often involve choices between the financial success of organisations, the well-being of employees and accountability to different stakeholders. Traditionally, personal responsibility has been associated in the literature with the expectation on the part of managers that another party (within or outside the organization) to whom he is accountable holds him responsible for (in)actions and decisions (Brandsma 2013). If we call this external accountability, it implies that there is another party in the decision-making context. Little attention has been paid in the literature to the psychological manifestation. It is the other kind of responsibility, the internal one, where a leader/manager is responsible to himself for his decisions and actions when no one else is present to monitor, control and hold him accountable (Ghanem 2019). We talk about this kind of responsibility in the context of coaching.

Low self-discipline

One of the factors for excellence and commitment appears to be self-discipline (C. Jung 1933) (Mann 2016). There are very few studies on self-discipline among mentally healthy people. One of the best known is perhaps Michel's on the effect of self-discipline in young children and how it affects the delay in satisfying a need, i.e. self-regulation. Through self-regulation one can predict the social success of the children studied decades later (W. S. Mischel 1988) (W. a. Mischel 2004). The ability to effectively self-regulate for the sake of desired long-term goals is presented in the broader context of the cognitive-affective personality system. Knowing that they are in control of creating and using their own strategies to obtain relevant outcomes in the future and being able to implement them gives people confidence, courage and reduces the sense of despair that the outcome is so distant. Earlier research on how different personality characteristics affect students' grades showed that of all 32 factors studied, only self-discipline influenced academic achievement (Raymond 1995). Self-discipline even outperforms intelligence test scores in predicting academic performance in youths (M. a. Seligman 2005).

Personal unconsciousness

Another aspect is one's own identity, the way a leader is perceived. It involves one's ability to focus on oneself rather than external circumstances and people. It is also a tool for personal development because it helps the leader to wisely and consciously improve his or her behaviors, beliefs, and actions. Self-perception involves self-criticism, self-monitoring and self-management.

There is research that shows a link between personal responsibility and workplace performance (Beu 2001) (Mansouri 2014). Leaders can manage their behaviors and behave more ethically with employees thus contributing to a better climate in the department and organization. Like reflection, personal responsibility is associated with good judgment of self and wisdom. One aspect of this is self-awareness. There is a thought of Einstein, "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking, and thus we are moving toward unparalleled catastrophe." (Einstein 1946) This thought, although related to the use of the atomic bomb, is significant because it very accurately describes the problem of lack of awareness. Namely: we are not conscious enough to know that there is a problem. This is one of the main reasons we are often unhappy, sick, poor, "stuck in one place" in our lives, unhappy with a job, a relationship or a situation and continue to stay stuck in that place. This is one of

the reasons why we don't seek outside help (from a psychologist, coach, mentor, friend), even though research shows that we don't always see the problem and, therefore, solve it ourselves. (Chandler 2011).

The dictionary defines awareness: knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or object in the present moment based on information or experience (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries 2022). If we are in a dark place, the way to know that something exists is to illuminate it. When in darkness, it does not mean that the thing does not exist. It just means that we don't know about its existence yet. Sometimes before we are aware, we smell smells or hear sounds or feel shapes, but we cannot pinpoint what is there. So it is with awareness. Many of the things that stop us from being truly ourselves we don't know about, we don't even suspect. This idea can be vividly represented by the so-called Johari Window, a model used in communication theory to raise awareness in groups (Chandler 2011) (Fig. 1) For example, we may possess some specific talents, skills, or abilities that we did not even assume were available to us. Coaching is a tool for awareness, understanding, clearer vision, more complete insight.

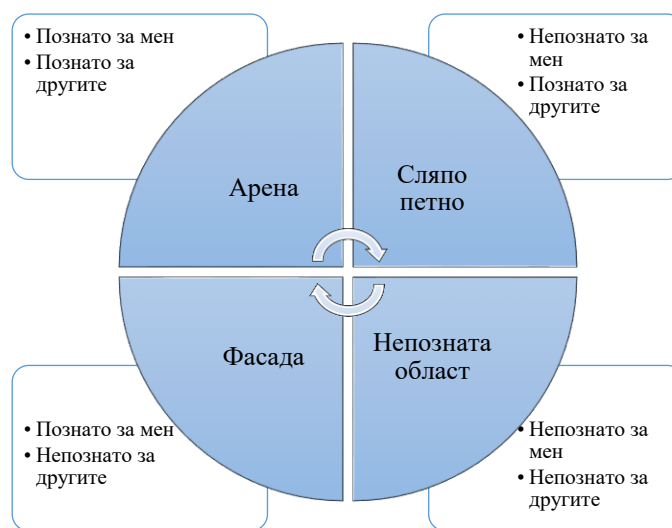


Figure 1 Johari's Window (Chandler 2011)

Research has shown that self-awareness, knowing oneself, one's feelings, thoughts, states, emotions, and self, are important for the development of leaders (Mirvis, Executive Development Through Consciousness Raising Experiences 2008) (Rubens 2018). On the face of it, the practice of raising self-awareness (with roots in socio-political discourse, in many forms of psychotherapy and many spiritual and ethical disciplines) seems rather remote when talking about developing business leaders. Yet it turns out that this theme is very applicable to leadership development today (Mirvis, Soul Work in Organizations 1997). When one knows

oneself and is more aware of the important and essential things in one's professional and personal life, one can take effective steps to move forward in the direction one desires (Kimsey-House 2011). In such a dynamic and indeterminate world, if one knows one's self well, one can effectively map out next steps for oneself and follow them. By doing so, he will be able to adhere to his values, truths and, while remaining in sync with his essence, be true to himself as much as possible.

Low emotional intelligence

In most leadership programs, there is almost no attention paid to developing emotional intelligence. This kind of intelligence includes understanding one's own emotions, how they can be managed, emotional self-control, sharing emotions, understanding the emotions of others, empathy, and managing relationships (Goleman, *The Emotionally Intelligent Leader* 2019). In his book, *The Emotional Intelligence of Leaders*, Goleman says, "This man was a true leader: he recognized a human problem and stepped in to find a solution. He showed both his leadership qualities and the characteristics of his heart, which I think are pretty much the same thing." (Goleman, *The Emotional Intelligence of Leaders*" 1998). Research has shown that emotional intelligence is related to three aspects of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational influence, and individual influence (Barling 2000). Self-awareness is also related to calmness, understanding others, communicating with others, and engaging with the larger world (Mirvis, *Executive Development Through Consciousness Raising Experiences* 2008). Perhaps part of the failure of a large percentage of leadership development programs is due to an emphasis on honing and changing skills and abilities, rather than taking into account the transformation of mindset and worldview that are innately necessary to achieve success.

Limited perceptions

In relation to the way of thinking and perceiving the world, each person has certain inherent filters through which he perceives reality (Amen 2013). Based on these filtered perceptions, one creates a "map of one's life" (R. Dilts, NLP 2020). This is the way in which, once one has formed any idea of one's own, one can take it out into the world. For in life, cause and effect is the human ability to make sense of two events occurring at similar times and thus create cause and effect, which in a large number of cases do not even really exist in the way they are created in the mind of man. We can clearly see the lack of cause and effect in the following situations: 'I have a hard time with business on Friday the 13th of the month'; 'I don't sign contracts with a

red pen'; 'it goes my way if it rains before an important meeting' (these are quotes from coaching sessions with leaders), which have actually brought negative outcomes for these leaders. Language contributes immensely to the use of these filters. One could even consider that language not only describes one's world, but creates that world. But this is a very large topic and one we will not address here. It may be a basis for future research. If one is helped to begin to detail, become aware of, recognize and, if necessary, modify and expand one's map (perceptions), one could model or, in other words, create one's life in a way that brings one ever closer to one's desired goals and important things. In this way he could increasingly manage his limiting situations. He can use them to expand his consciousness and to create conditions of choice and situations that lead him to success (R. Dilts, *From Coach to Awakener* 2003). That is, one can consciously minimize his limitations and realize his full potential. In this way he can contribute to the development of others and society (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970).

Ignorance of the psychological profile

Also, each person has a certain psychological profile. There are different tests that are used in hiring. For example, to determine how fit a person is for a particular position and job. One of the most commonly used models is, so called. "The Big Five"⁴ (OCEAN) or "Five Factor Model of Personality Characteristics" (L. Goldberg 1990) (L. a. Goldberg 1998). This model looks at how a person evaluates themselves as open, conscientious, extroverted/introverted, cooperative, and neurotic. Another widely used test is the DISC⁵ (DISC Personality Testing 2020). This test examines people on the scales of dominance, influence, resilience and agreeableness. Depending on their psychological characteristics a leader has a specific management style. In certain situations and relationships with people in teams, these specific psychological characteristics can be challenging. The leader may not be able to cope and manage them. The situation can be even more challenging for others on the team. It is important that, regardless of personal characteristics, the leader can create an atmosphere of understanding and security. This higher degree of awareness is usually difficult to achieve on one's own and the leader seeks external support from a coach, psychologist, mentor, etc.

⁴ Big Five (OCEAN - openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism)

⁵ From English DISC (dominance, influence, steadiness, compliance)

Ineffective communication (communication)

The Aristotle Project (Google's five-year study of high-performing teams) found that the psychological safety of team members feeling secure that "the team will not embarrass, reject, or punish anyone for speaking out" thereby taking risks and allowing people to be vulnerable with each other, appears to be the most important of the five dynamics that distinguish successful teams. (Duhigg 2016). This psychological safety enables difficult conversations to be had, useful feedback to be given, delegation to be better, people to be honest and open and to feel accepted and respected. In this way, the leader also provides the conditions for honest and open communication.


Open communication is positively related to engagement and job satisfaction even in times of crisis (Shulga 2020). Research has shown the close association between leadership, open communication and personal and professional well-being (Jiang 2015). Leaders who communicate openly, encourage the expression of diverse positions, adhere to their moral values and principles, and objectively analyze all related information before reaching a conclusion or decision help reduce employee frustration and uncertainty. The skills of having honest and open conversations, of seeking and giving good-intentioned feedback, of ending difficult conversations, which can be honed during leadership programmes (and through coaching in particular), can be used not only in the work context but also in personal relationships (Cox 2010). This is because a person is a single entity and personal development, in this case the development of communication and collaboration skills, influences one's management style and for better wellbeing (ICF 2009).

Lack of calm and inner peace

Inner peace and tranquility are one aspect of well-being (Gallup 2021). Chronic stress, burnout and insecurity threaten people's mental and physical health. The inability to usually manage internal states (anxiety, depression, tension, helplessness, dejection, aggression, anger, alienation, loneliness, depression and many others) leads to further tension, guilt, resentment and resentment. All of these combined at additional levels with major and unexpected changes in work and family environments as a result of the coliform pandemic, lead to the highest levels of stress that researchers have reported in the last 2 years (Gallup 2021). Employees who experience less stress and burnout are more engaged at work and report higher levels of well-being (Pendell, 7 Gallup Workplace Insights: What We Learned in 2021 2022).

Unexpected results show Gallup research in partnership with the Foundation for the Wellbeing of Planet Earth⁶. They decided to include more perspectives than those tested in previous years. Such perspectives include concepts rooted in Eastern philosophy and religion that have rarely been consulted in well-being research in the past. Unexpectedly, these ideas, usually associated with Eastern cultures, are also found to be highly valued by Western cultures. As many as 72% of people in 116 of the 118 countries surveyed want to have a peaceful life versus an exciting life (Crabtree 2021). 2020 has officially become the most stressful year in recent human history. The jump is five points compared to the previous most stressful year 2019 - from 35% to 40% in 2020. This means that by 190 million people globally, there has been an increase in the number of those who experienced stress during much of the previous day (Gallup 2021). So the business world is turning in a new direction. For corporations, it is becoming clear that it is important and necessary to turn the focus from purely financial performance to employees. Younger generations, so-called millennials born between 1980 and 1995 and generation Z born between 1996 and the early 2000s, are more likely to rank wealth as the most important thing they look for in an employer (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). Any organization that needs young leaders, i.e. any organization, it is important to think about how to make well-being an essential part of the employee experience.

We can summarise the challenges for leaders in Figure 2 below.



Предизвикателства пред лидерите

- ниска самодисциплина
- ниска самоувереност
- непоемане на отговорност
- лична неосъзнатост
- ниска емоционална интелигентност
- органичени възприятия
- психологическа неподготвеност
- неефективно общуване
- липса на спокойствие и вътрешен мир

Figure 2 Challenges for leaders, own research

⁶ Wellbeing for Planet Earth Foundation

1.1.3. Challenges facing modern organisations

In the last few years, the world has evolved so dynamically that it was unthinkable a decade ago. We humans have access to a virtually unlimited source of information. But the majority of organizations and individuals have been virtually unable to adapt to these rates of development, much less adjust their minds to them (Villiers 2013). These changes both contribute to the learning and development of individuals, e.g. the opportunity for constant learning and development, the facilitation of the work process by new technologies, the convenience of working from home or anywhere in the world, and lead to constant stress, alienation, deteriorated relationships, and lack of social life. In Bulgaria, people are extremely unhappy (Eurostat 2015) and disengaged (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). The scale of the changes and disruptions they are causing in work, workers and the work environment, and their impact on employers, is so great that Deloitte talk of 'remaking organisations', affecting them to the core (Deloitte 2020).

Low commitment of leaders

For years, Gallup has observed an extremely low level of engagement, which for the past dozen years has hovered between 21% and 19% of all working people globally (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). Of this roughly 80% disengaged, approximately 20% are actively disengaged, i.e., they disrupt discipline, sabotage, abuse sick leave, engage others in actions that undermine the organization's authority, etc. Given that managers have a large impact on their teams because they account for at least 70% of the variance in team engagement (i.e.i.e. a one-point change in leader commitment changes team commitment by 0.7 points), their low personal commitment and development have a significant impact on the performance of entire teams and organizations (Gallup 2019). From 2000 to 2019, Germany, for example, has seen an almost unchanged extremely low level of engagement of less than 15% of employees (approximately the same for other European countries). From this, the country loses on average about 200,000,000,000,000 leva per year. The big problem here appears to be that only 35% of managers in the US, for example, are engaged and as many as 14% are actively disengaged (Gallup 2015) (Fig. 3).

■ Ангажирани ■ Неангажирани ■ Активно неангажирани

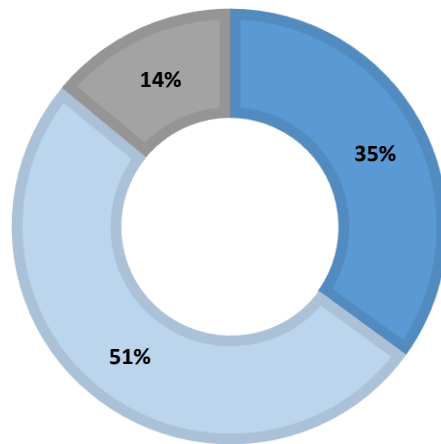


Figure 3 Engagement of US managers (Gallup 2015)

At the same time, 60% of employees report they would be engaged if they worked with engaged managers. And managers who work with engaged leaders in 39% of cases are more likely to be engaged. That is, a cascading effect occurs. This is why it is even more urgent to create and cultivate engaged managers and leaders. Gallup's meta-analysis of the impact of employee engagement and organizational business performance shows a correlation of 0.43. Employees in the top half of engagement contribute nearly 2 times the benefits of employees in the bottom half of engagement (Gallup 2016). There is a strong and positive relationship between engagement and ratings from customers, profit, sales, revenue. Strong and negative is the relationship between engagement and work incidents, reduced production, absenteeism and marriage (Gallup 2016). Comparing the top 25% to the bottom 25% in Gallup's research on the outcomes of higher employee engagement for teams and organizations shows greater organizational success measured in 23% higher productivity, 66% higher well-being, and 13% higher commitment to the organization's values (Harter 2020). These influences, the research shows, are even stronger in recession years such as 2001, 2002, 2008 and 2009.

Low performance

Well-being appears to be one of the main priorities of organisations (Clifton 2021). 24% of U.S. workers say they have felt great sadness the day before, 28% say they experience burnout often or always, and 70% of people globally are suffering or struggling with important things in their lives (Gallup 2022).

Gallup viewed well-being as the sum of 5 aspects:

- meaning (how good a person feels about what they do every day and how motivated they are to achieve their goals),
- Social (to have true friendships, valuable relationships and affection),
- Financial (manage your money well to reduce stress and increase security),
- physically (good health and energy to do things every day) and
- community (like where they live and be safe) (Gallup 2021).

Some of the costs that employers and society pay in the U.S. for workers' lack of well-being are: \$322 billion in lost productivity and turnover; 15% to 20% loss in total payroll costs due to workers taking unpaid leave at will, primarily due to burnout; \$2 billion for every million workers due to suffering employees (Gallup 2022). Gallup finds that workers who report well-being across all five elements (meaning, social, financial, community, physical) are less likely to miss work, have higher ratings from customers, solve problems more easily, and adapt to change more quickly than employees who rate highly on only one element of their well-being. Employees with high well-being across all five elements also save their companies money on healthcare costs and turnover. Additionally, such employees are 81% less likely to look for a new employer in the next year compared to employees who report well-being in only the physical aspect.

Divergent influences exerted on leaders

"The 'map of the world', the way people with internal drive, charisma, status, position and power in society perceive and live their lives, influences those around them - family, colleagues, teams, society and, ultimately, future generations. In turn, others in the team and organization influence the leader. When we talk about leadership, let's take a more comprehensive view. Let's look at an integrated model of leadership, because leadership involves different circles of events (Eberly 2013):

- the leader with his personality characteristics and in its entirety, his positive emotions and belief in the team,
- the followers with their confidence, optimism and effectiveness, the team with their optimism, confidence and effectiveness and the context in which it all exists,
- the organization, the society with its culture, expectations, constraints

It is therefore very important to understand the context in which the leader is working and what and how he can influence, as well as what influences are exerted on him. For example, in an organisation where security and stability are core values, an active, proactive leader with an innovative mindset and a high tolerance for risk is unlikely to be well received and will not have the opportunity to develop the talents they possess. And the quality of human resources is probably the most important indicator of the growth and sustainability of organizations (International Coaching Federation. 2016). Once people are hired, they begin to perform their tasks, to make decisions that can affect the (un)success of the organization. Therefore, on the one hand, it is important how people are hired, what tools are used in the process to put the right people in the right positions (Schmidt 1981) (Hunter 1983), but how managers/leaders then perform depends entirely on their motivations, needs and internal drives.

Appointment of unsuitable leaders

Gallup research shows that 82% of the time, U.S. companies fail to hire candidates with the right talent for management positions (Gallup 2015). Again, it shows that only 10% of survey participants have an innate, "God-given" talent to lead teams (Fig. 4). They know how to motivate each person on their team, courageously discuss performance, build relationships, overcome difficulties, and make decisions based on performance rather than political decisions. On the other hand, managers with little talent for the job deal with workplace problems through manipulation and unprincipled political decisions. Another 20% have some characteristics of functional management talent and can perform at a high level if the organization coaches and supports them.



Figure 4 Managerial talent for excellent performance (Gallup 2015)

The biggest problem is that traditional training doesn't work in this regard. This is also a big untapped potential by organizations. Instead of traditional trainings, although they are still preferred by HR professionals (Rekalde 2017), the choice of senior executives is increasingly EC.

We can summarise the challenges facing organisations in Figure 5.



Предизвикателства пред организациите

- ниска ангажираност на лидерите
- ниска производителност
- разнопосочни влияния върху лидерите
- назначаване на неподходящите лидери
- неподготвени за промените лидери

Figure 5 Challenges for organisations, own research

1.1.4. Issues for leadership development programs

At the same time, leadership in companies is critically weak. It is extremely difficult to find true leaders to take on key leadership positions in organisations and lead their teams. Over 50% of U.S. corporations are incredibly hard pressed to fill key leadership positions. And a number of studies show that climate, team motivation, morale and, ultimately, financial performance are directly related to the skills of leaders and their performance. Therefore, the issue of leaders' self-actualization is key to the success of organizations.

1. Traditional assessment and development techniques, 360 degree surveys, outdated assessment criteria produce skewed results. They are marked by subjective reliance, large time lags, take a snapshot at a particular moment, and fail to account for the neuroplasticity of the human brain and its ability to learn and develop on a daily basis (M. Merzenich 2018) (M. V. Merzenich 2014).
2. Traditionally, leadership development programs have been based on the now outdated understanding that employers and organizations are responsible for the development of their leaders, and it is done through carefully discussed and planned activities and actions, usually led by employees who have such a job description: trainers, coaches, HR specialists. Some of the standard formal methods of leadership development such as training, personality assessments, university and college programmes, classroom workshops, mentoring, counselling have produced good results, as shown by research findings (Dachner 2019) (Bell 2017). Planned and executed in this way, the measures

have failed to produce great leaders, as the studies cited as examples above show. The effective learning and development of great leaders occurs in the context of their own strategic, economic, intellectual and emotional agenda (Rogers, Person Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory 1951) (Rubens 2018) (Rothstein 2010).

3. In the last few years, new trends have begun to be considered in human resource management theory (Dachner 2019). Work and the ways in which it is organised - multicultural teams, teleworking and working from home, frequent changes of employer, extremely dynamic developments in technology, the ever-increasing number of 'freelancers', including the large number of people employed in 'new' professions such as influencers, bloggers, vloggers⁷ - requires an expansion of the traditional concept of professional development within the organisation. Such development is actively sought and implemented by leaders themselves without necessarily expecting intervention from organisations. It is characterised by benefits for the professional and personal development of the individuals themselves, which is independent of a change of job or even profession.
4. Typically, leadership development programs include less deserving and mature leaders who are eager to learn and develop. Rather, the practice is for participants to be administratively designated by management, e.g., promoted, newly appointed, or having served certain years in the organization. There are also cases where family members are trained to take over the business. No matter what the reason, if leaders are not ready for this step and do not want it, it is not effective. It is also necessary to note cases where leadership programmes are mainly for managers from the headquarters of the respective organisations and offices in other regions/cities/countries are not proportionately included. This leaves out leaders who would be extremely valuable for organisational development (Ratanjee 2020). Instead of this way of recruiting to participate in leadership development programmes, there is a need to take an individualised approach in selecting participants and choosing methods to work with them.
5. Classroom trainings, seminars, webinars and similar activities, for which organizations invest huge amounts of money, turn out to be ineffective because they are a type of one-

⁷ This can be the basis for future research - how the "new" professions are developed and taught

time learning. As Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve shows, about 70% of what is learned is forgotten within a day. (Ebbinghaus 2013). It is therefore necessary to develop leaders with programmes that cover a longer period of time and, above all, are based on experiences and not on a formal transmission of knowledge by, for example, a lecturer, teacher or mentor.

6. Typically, leadership development programs are based on developing flaws, weaknesses and aim to "improve", polish the diamond so to speak. Contrary to these long-established practices, however, according to the latest trends, leaders' strengths are worked with, their talents are developed (Ratanjee 2020) (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018). In doing so, they are provided with practical opportunities to step out of their comfort zone, out of comfortable actions and behaviours, to experiment, make mistakes and learn from their mistakes and so grow. Such an environment of tolerating mistakes along the path of growth is not only tolerated, it is created in Silicon Valley companies (Porat 2022). If organizations are more likely to emphasize developing the talents of their leaders rather than correcting mistakes, leaders are 2 times more likely to be engaged shows Gallup research (Gallup 2015). A startlingly low percentage of US managers are engaged - just 35%. This statistic is even more alarming because the disengagement of managers and leaders is detrimental to organizations. The same study shows that from so many disengaged managers and the impact they have on lowering the engagement of the teams they work with, the U.S. economy lost between \$77 and \$96 billion in 2015.

Recent years, particularly accelerated by the covid-19 pandemic, have seen a process shift to a different way of developing leaders, to put the focus on the human side of organisations (Gallup 2022) (Deloitte 2020). For example, in his research on the qualities exhibited by leaders, Daniel Goleman found that emotional intelligence is twice as important as technical skills and intellect for all levels in organizations. The research shows that emotional intelligence is even more important for people in high positions in organisations (Goleman, The Emotionally Intelligent Leader 2019). When he compared the best executives in senior leadership positions with their average-performing counterparts, nearly 90% of the difference in their profiles was due to factors related to emotional intelligence rather than cognitive ability. In order for organizations to respond to the new reality and new needs of leaders, they need a paradigm shift and a change in the ways in which learning and leadership development is viewed.

1.1.5. New trends in leadership development

Here we can mention a few of these new trends and how executive coaching can be useful:

1. **Learning and Development (L&D).** In the context of ever more rapidly evolving technologies, transformation of the way of working (from home and hybrid), the need for extremely rapid upskilling in specific areas, the acquisition of new skills and internal flexibility of the individual is increasingly clear. JPMorgan Chase is dedicating \$600 million to reskilling and upskilling its employees (JPMorgan Chase 2019). Amazon set aside \$700 million to upskill its employees (CNBC 2019). PriceWaterhouseCoopers has planned \$3 billion to upskill all of its 275,000 employees globally over the next three to four years under its New World, New Skills program(LinkedIn, 2021). The way in which coaching can be incorporated as part of employee and leader development is to enhance the effectiveness of upskilling and re-skilling programmes by bringing an element of individualisation and specific work with participants, focusing on their specific needs and strengths and working purposefully and holistically to manifest their potential personally and professionally. In addition, to provide the necessary space of acceptance, understanding and respect in which to carry out this development.
2. **Shifting the focus for learning and development from the employer to the employees.** Until recently, it was considered that up-skilling and learning measures were a company decision, the employer's decision, with lecturers aligned to development plans developed to serve the organisation's objectives. But this approach prevents us from understanding what has been happening recently. In recent years, due to the deep crisis the world is in, there has been a reluctance on the part of many employers to invest in learning and human resource development. In contrast to the above-mentioned examples of devoting an enormous amount of resources to employee development, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in this country have begun their cost-cutting measures by slashing their learning and development budgets. The responsibility for learning new skills and retraining to meet the needs of dynamically evolving technologies is shifting to employees themselves (Dachner 2019). With the extraordinary opportunities for individualized learning and development that the Internet provides, each person can develop in ways they want or as part of a development program. This personal development program can also be supported by the employer, as it is in France, for example, as part of working hours. It can also be a

personal initiative with one's own resources and outside working hours. New development methods such as coaching are therefore extremely useful in today's environment. It helps for more clarity, self-confidence, creativity, integrity, understanding one's own values, needs and desires. With this set of skills and qualities, a person can much more honestly orient himself in what direction to continue his movement (Kimsey-House 2011). Often one also understands the importance of the movement itself. Coaching can help a person who has become stuck in an adverse situation to get moving, find inner resources, and move in the direction they want to (Noble Manhattan 2007). Thus, personal benefits also lead to better teamwork skills, better career development and, ultimately, are good for the organization. Not only for the employing organization at the moment, but also for any subsequent organization one would enter as part of the team, because one enters with everything that one is: mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually (Bell 2017).

- 3. Well-being now with the focus shifted away from the organisation and placed not even just on the employees but on their families.** Many corporations, as exemplified by Hewlett Packard, have special programs that provide health and well-being apps, educational resources for working parents to manage their children's homeschooling, a resource group for employee-working parents, and job sharing for given job roles (Meister 2022). Amazon, Deloitte, Google, the Boston Consulting Group, Genetech, Hyatt, Salesforce, Cisco Systems and the list goes on. Micro, small and medium enterprises in our country very rarely have programs that are in this direction. From the author's conversations with entrepreneurs in Bulgaria, it can be concluded that the last two years employers have been more focused on "somehow peeling off", "coming alive", "moving on", rather than devoting resources to further qualification or retraining of their people. There are several problems with this approach: if people's skills are not updated, businesses cannot survive in this crisis and increasing competition for fewer customers. Of course, there are many businesses for which the C20-19 crisis is proving to be a springboard for growth. These are courier services, e-commerce, some specific financial services. In these services, there is another problem that can be summed up by the statement of a business owner: "business is going anyway and we are failing, what is the point of investing in people?" Coaching could prove effective and useful here too. It is possible to easily improve the social or so-called soft skills of employees and

executives, including relationships, engagement, emotional intelligence, empathy, giving and receiving feedback, teamwork skills, leadership skills. And all of these benefits can be obtained not from the position of lecturers telling training rooms how things should be and people just practising them (as in training), but in individualised meetings using the coaching method, where natural learning, learning with meaning, in a way tailored to each leader, at a time tailored to each leader, on topics that come from the leader themselves. In addition, other areas of impact could be: clarity about strategic business development, overcoming constant stress and overwork, improving the relationship with family and children, achieving more peace and balance in life and work, preparation, including psychological, for promotion and taking on different responsibilities, going into new markets, managing in times of crisis, managing multinational, multicultural, multiethnic teams located around the world.

4. **Leaders are actively engaged in their own development and learning.** With all the current forms of formal (courses, workshops, employer programs, NGOs, professional organizations, colleges and universities, academies) and informal (mentors, resource groups, interest groups, coaches, webinars, meetings) learning available that are tailored for both face-to-face and online or hybrid participation, leaders have an opportunity that they are increasingly using (Dachner 2019) to plan and conduct their own individual personal and professional development pathways. This is where coaching is a highly effective method because it provides clarity of direction, discipline, and honesty that help set more meaningful and honest goals and achieve them with more ease and joy. This in turn helps career development and brings benefits to the organization.

Many of the author's clients over the years have reported the main reason they began a coaching-based interaction as the challenges they encounter in balancing personal and professional life, work and rest pressures, stress and lack of inner peace, pursuing and achieving financial success, and more time for children, loved ones, and friends.

Traditionally, training has been organized and set goals that stem from now outdated ideas of service to manufacturing organizations (Trice 1993). These include, for example, the narrow definition of job duties, supervision by immediate supervisors, and a focus on short-term results and performance. Until a few years ago, the development and learning of the working person was associated in management science and practice with the planning and commissioning of certain activities (training, workshops, mentoring, coaching, etc.) primarily and mainly by

employers with the idea of higher performance and the achievement of organizational goals (Stone in press). However, globalization and the development of technology are forcing professionals involved in human resource development and training to look at work and new demands on employees in a new way. Instead of manufacturing organisations, global business increasingly needs service and knowledge organisations and therefore their share is growing (Anderson 2003). These essentially new organizations are realizing the importance of employee knowledge, skills and commitment to organizational performance. Employee retention and development is important because their unique qualities are irreplaceable (Trice 1993). Therefore, increasing attention is being paid to the welfare of employees and even their families. Quite naturally executive coaching is becoming an indispensable part of leadership development programs. Tailored to the specifics of each leader's process, it supports leaders by providing contexts and personal development experiences through which one can move to a new level of awareness of one's needs, values, goals and focus. Also to improve one's leadership style by coming face to face with one's limitations and fears, working through them, and facing oneself and the people one leads in the true light of who one is as a person - honest, responsible, sincere, and confident (Kimsey-House 2011).

Coaching results for business owners, entrepreneurs and senior executives depend on the client. Because each person has certain personality characteristics, attitudes, values, goals, limitations and perception. Some clients are more susceptible to change and development, are more flexible and learn from every situation in their lives. Others are more original, more straightforward and disengaged. It is important to note that executive coaching is a highly individualized process to do the work of the respective leader, with their respective goals and agenda, and that the partner in this relationship is a well-defined coach with their personal attitudes, skills, experience, values and personality characteristics. It is therefore crucial that client and coach are aligned and able to partner for success. Research has shown that the quality of the relationship between coach and client is one of the most important predictors of success with the coaching method (Ackerman 2003). It is the low quality of the relationship due to, for example, low motivation on the part of the leader or unpreparedness on the part of the coach that can lead to undesirable side effects of coaching such as decreased job satisfaction or engagement (C. a. Schermuly 2018). Furthermore, it is good to note that the benefits of coaching are cumulative - for the individual, the team and the organization.

In addition to the benefits related to personal development, there are dozens of studies on the ways executive coaching affects the psychological capital and creativity of colleagues and partners (Rego 2012), leading to more committed and stronger teams (Vitoria 2012), on the performance of "followers" in extreme circumstances (S. W. Peterson 2011), to serving others and creating group cohesion and satisfaction (Diddams 2012), to more trust in management (C. S. Burke 2007). As the results of a Gallup survey "What employees want from their leaders in times of crisis" show (Gallup 2021) these are the following four of the basic human needs:

- trust
- Compassion
- stability and
- hope

When they trust their leaders, 50% of employees are engaged at work, as opposed to 8% engaged if they don't trust. Employees are 9 times more likely to be engaged at work if they know the organization's financial health is sound. Engaged at work are 69% of employees who say they strongly agree with the statement that their leaders make them "feel more enthusiastic about their future." And executive coaching can be used to influence these qualities in leaders.

1.2 Coaching as a method for development

Coaching is an extremely new for Bulgaria method for developing and using the potential of a person. The word coaching comes from the English language and is currently accepted without translation not only in Bulgarian but also in many other languages. Coaching used to mean "ride in a car" (post car), it went through - "prepare for an exam" (19c, Oxford slang), through - "prepare for a competition" to get to today's coaching. That is, we can say that the definition involves helping a person move from where they are (in life - personally and/or professionally) to where they want to be, to formulate, set and effectively achieve their goals in life. Globally, coaching is the second fastest growing industry after Information Technology. It is both a profession and a method of communication and personal development, extremely common in some countries (especially English speaking) such as the USA, Canada, UK, Australia. This method is quite new for other countries like Bulgaria, Romania, Greece. Coaching as part of corporate culture has been adopted by a number of multinational corporations such as Amazon, Google, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Hewlett-Packard, by medium and small businesses, NGOs and universities.

Forbes survey data for 2013 (Adams 2013) indicate that 25-40% of Fortune 500 companies invested more than \$1 billion in executive coaching in 2012, and the return on investment was more than 10 times (International Coaching Federation. 2016).

1.2.1. The essence of coaching

Most authors, theorists and practitioners, are of the opinion that coaching is a method for people to start working and living to their fullest potential, that it is a process of development, of maximizing personal and professional potential, of finding answers within oneself. Ultimately, however, there is no accepted single definition of what coaching is, and there are many.

In this paper, the author draws on several of these definitions to summarise the 'meaning of coaching'. They are given by training organizations well represented in our country. According to the International Coach Federation (ICF), "Coaching is partnering with clients in a process of provoking truth and creativity that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential." (ICF 2019). According to Erickson International, a leading training organization, "Coaching is a process of working to improve a client's performance, usually through one-on-one work as well as reflecting on how to apply specific knowledge and skills. Coaching acts as a driving force that releases human potential and generates new and creative ideas, patterns and behaviours that lead to success." (Erickson International 2018). Another definition from Noble Manhattan, an organization that trains coaches, "Coaching is about performing at your best through the individual and personal help of someone who will challenge, stimulate and guide you to continue to grow." (Noble Manhattan n.d.)

The author offers his definition of the essence of coaching, "Coaching is a partnership relationship between client and coach that creates a space of trust, acceptance, and respect. It evokes the client's naturalness, creativity, and sincerity so that they can courageously be more of who they really are."

Coaching is a method with a wide scope and many areas of application. The main ones could be divided into 3 categories: personal, business and executive, i.e. **for business owners, entrepreneurs and senior executives**. In the interest of brevity and clarity, let's adopt "**executive coaching**" to describe this type of coaching.

Subjects in personal coaching are individual clients who want development, change, focus, balance, awareness in some of the main areas of human life: relationships, health, career,

finances, personal development, physical environment, leisure and entertainment. Subjects in business coaching are work teams and/or employees who are worked with to achieve specific, valuable goals for the organization such as: motivation, performance improvement, retention, delegation. Subjects in executive coaching are business owners, entrepreneurs and senior executives.

In 2012, the Wharton Business School began its Executive Coaching and Feedback Program, which is open to all students in the MBA programs (Wharton 2022). The intent is to fill their leadership gaps through individualized leadership development coaching processes. The Kellogg School of Management is also developing, introducing and facilitating a well-run leadership development coaching program for participants in Kellogg's Executive Education Program (Northwestern Kellogg 2022). These institutions, which are known for their focus on operational and analytical achievement, also look to executive coaching to enhance the individual leadership abilities of their graduates. Coaching is a part of leadership programs at all top universities, including but not limited to Harvard (Harvard Business School 2022), Oxford (University of Oxford, Said Business School 2022), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (MIT Management Executive Education 2022), Stanford (Stanford Graduate School of Business 2022).

There are no precise studies, but practice shows that in the vast majority of companies and organizations in our country this method is not known even theoretically. This paper serves to explore the benefits of this method of working and communication and contribute to its increasing use to enhance the effectiveness of leaders and entire organizations thereby helping the Bulgarian economy.

As mentioned above, in developed countries around the world, coaching is the norm for leaders at the highest levels of business and power. Some of the most commonly cited benefits are cited in the annual PriceWaterhouseCoopers survey commissioned by the International Coaching Federation (International Coaching Federation. 2016) (Fig. 6).

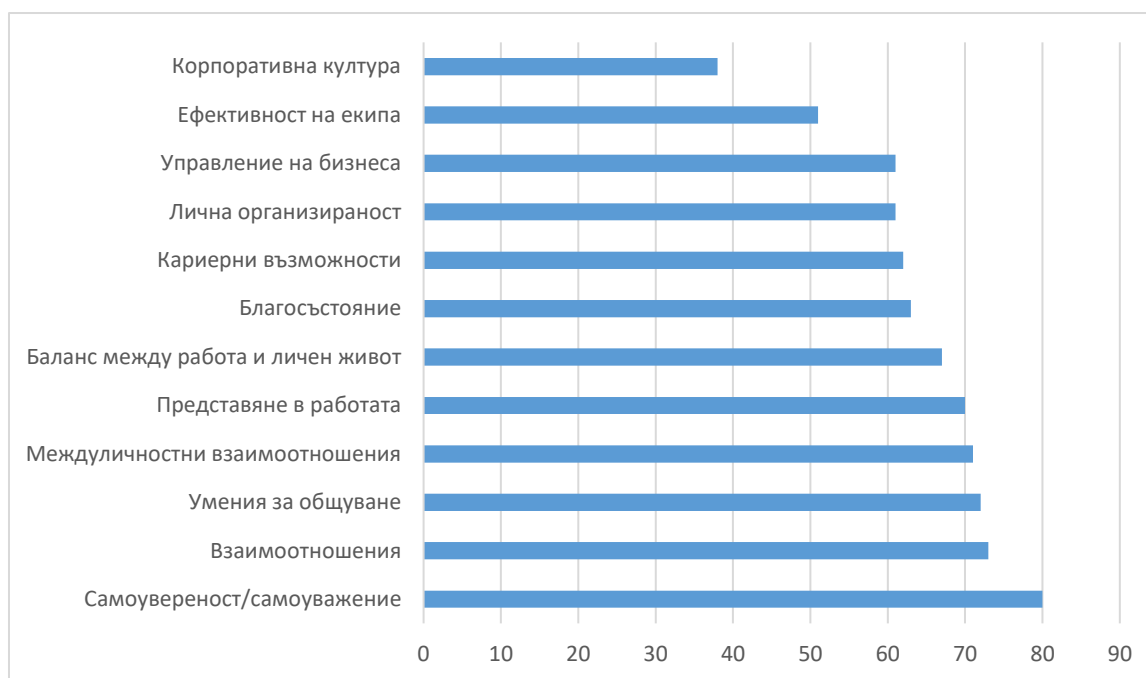


Figure 6 Positive effects of coaching (International Coaching Federation. 2016)

The same study shows that the return on investment (ROI) on average for employers who commission coaching is 700%, i.e. 7 times. Almost a fifth of respondents, 19%, reported a return of over 50 times. Going beyond the numbers, coaching is a personal development method whose benefits can be measured in happiness, satisfaction, experience of fulfillment and self-esteem. Coaching is so effective and powerful as a way for people to live more fully that it is one of the fastest growing industries today (Noble Manhattan n.d.). This tremendous interest and focused attention make it difficult to accept a single definition of coaching.

The inner need to discover one's true potential is one of the driving forces for the realization of ultimate human - personal and professional - potential (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970) (Rogers, Freedom to Learn 1959). The process of realizing and realizing human skills and creative potential, viewed from this psychological perspective, enables a holistic approach to human existence. Man is a unified whole of his thoughts, body, emotions, and spirituality (Fig. 7).



Себереализация

Хармонизация на

- Мисли
- Емоции
- Въображение
- Душа
- Тяло

Figure 7 Self-realisation, own interpretation

Accepting as a basis the view of the integrity of man, his freedom to freely choose his self-realization (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970), through coaching one is enabled to move from what one is now to what one was born to be. And here it is essential to emphasize that by "what one is born to be" we do not mean an ideal, an illusion that rather stands in one's way because of its inherent unattainability. We understand that inner striving of man to realize himself in the fullest possible way. This understanding can be explained as Maslow's self-realization, the idea of mentally healthy people (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970). The term self actualizing people is perceived. They are characterized by:

- perception of reality and an uncanny ability to detect the false, the dishonest in personality;
- full and natural acceptance of the human self - of oneself and others - with all its flaws and inconsistencies with the "ideal" image;
- autonomy, which is manifested in a relatively high degree of independence from the constraints of the physical and social environment. Self-actualizing people's satisfaction is largely independent of the acceptance, admiration, evaluation of others. They have no need for money, status, or power in order to be motivated;
- humility and respect - so they use to learn and develop from every situation, from every person they meet, regardless of the characteristics that these other people have. These individuals often have genuine respect and humility for people who give them new knowledge, skill, dexterity, and support them in achieving new insight and growth;

- fresh appreciations - again and again, childishly naïve, full of awe and delight, they perceive with wonder the little things of life that have long since become annoying to "ordinary" people;
- peak experiences - subjective, called mystical, feeling of boundless horizons, ecstasy, wonder, awe, loss of sense of time and place. Whereas people, Maslow calls them the mentally unhealthy, are usually motivated in their movement and growth by their needs such as security, survival, belonging, recognition, the self-actualizing are motivated solely by their inner need for development. These peak experiences are characterized by "a sudden sense of intense happiness and well-being," "awareness of some higher truth and the oneness of all things," "loss of sense of time and place," "heightened sensuality and ecstasy" (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970).

These characteristics may seem extreme and unattainable. Maslow speaks of self-realization not being a once-and-for-all fact, but a process of continuous discovery of one's (Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* 1968). In this sense, these characteristics indicate a direction of human development that is based not on the satisfaction of deficiency needs, but on higher order needs, the so-called needs of the self such as beauty, goodness, order, love, peace. The basis of the present work is the view of a possible self-realization of each person. In his later works Maslow, as well as other authors (Rogers, *Person Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory* 1951) accepted the possibility that every person possesses the capacity for self-actualization. It is necessary to create the necessary conditions for this, such as being accepted by others positively, as they are, regardless of behavior or other conditioning, being loved and respected. For Carl Jung, this is the process of individuation, of the realization of one's personal potential, which unfolds over a lifetime and leads to an increased sense of uniqueness and, at the same time, universality of one's inner nature (C. Jung 1933). These conditions are not usually typical of the environment in which people live and develop. Therefore, inconsistencies occur with what one's purpose is, one's talents, potentials and possibilities and reality - in personal and professional aspects. In order to meet people's needs, some organisations have put in place systems of measures to support them in this respect, such as: internal and external training, mentoring, coaching.

Coaching has grown into a huge \$2.4 billion+ industry globally (International Coaching Federation. 2016). Based on this third iteration of the ICF's research on the size and scope of the coaching profession and comparative analysis and tracking in 2009 and 2012 respectively,

it is found that coaching continues to evolve. In addition, as more individuals and organizations have adopted coaching, the coaching skills and approaches used are expanding beyond professionally trained coaches. They include managers, executives, and HR and talent development professionals who apply these competencies to their daily interactions in the workplace. In addition, coaching is also used in non-work settings and involves the personal development of clients regarding health, relationships, communication, spiritual self, emotional intelligence, and more.

Coaching as a tool and method for human - personal and professional - development is widespread mostly in North America and Western Europe, where it can be considered to have reached its mature phase. (International Coaching Federation. 2016). In Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria, it is still developing.

Interaction based on the use of coaching is a real and practical opportunity for each person to achieve fulfillment in life. In their work, each coach uses approaches and methods in which they have been trained. It is important that the client chooses a coach with whom they can build a trusting and fulfilling relationship. This is one of the most important conditions to achieve success in the interaction (Hodgetts 2002) (Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957). The coach may use tools from applied psychology, cognitive behavioral therapy, positive psychology, outcome-focused therapy, role play, person-centered therapy, art therapy, psychodrama, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), meditation techniques, and others in which he or she is trained (Peltier 2009).

This work is based on the idea of wholeness of man - the unity of reason, feelings and spirituality. In this creative process, strictly individual and focused on the client's awareness of values, goals and priorities, one goes through the formulation of a sequence of goals to serve the client's maximum development and realization. In addition, the client's limitations, beliefs and filters that have previously prevented him or her from moving beyond certain boundaries, achieving certain goals of his or her own and, therefore, living a happier, more fulfilled and engaged life are addressed (Noble Manhattan 2007). It comes down to changing beliefs, shifting the client's paradigm, mapping out the actions that will effectively lead them where they want to go, tracking progress and course correcting when necessary.

It is interesting to observe how this process is as much individual as it is universal - several common 'spheres' of clients' lives are considered and these spheres turn out to be connected.

The main ones are health, career, finances, family and friends, intimate relationships, personal development and expression, leisure and entertainment (Fig. 8). This coaching process enables a person to reach a new level of awareness. And often the client comes with a job application in one area, e.g. finance, and in the process finds that he is, in fact, "stuck" in the career area as a result of the lack of intimate connection.



Figure 8 Most frequent areas of work, own interpretation

Coaching is effective for different and often individual reasons. Some of these are that a professional coach can help a client look at a situation from a different perspective, find new, previously untapped resources, recognize new opportunities, believe in themselves, act more effectively, be filled with enthusiasm, and influence others. (Peltier 2009).

Interestingly, coaching develops "from the inside out". Supporting people of different nationalities, professions, ages, genders etc. to be more themselves, coaches specialise in particular areas (personal, business, leadership), different fields (corporate, financial, health, relationship, media, sports etc.)

1.2.2. The coaching process : practical dimensions

The process of coaching is initiated by a person (client) who is in the process of seeking some change in their life.

Changes can be of different types (Noble Manhattan 2007):

- more than something (money, satisfaction, work, travel, health, rest, energy, enthusiasm, understanding);
- less of something (weight loss, stress, aggression, grief, fear, doubt, fatigue, insecurity);
- substantive (new job, new partner, new business, new responsibilities, promotions, new team, new project)

The common thread is that the person feels out of balance and is in active search of solutions, open to learning and expanding their comfort zone. For some people at certain times this state can be frightening and they may even be in a period of numbness or avoidance. Those who choose to continue to evolve, even in such a difficult and challenging period for them, have the power to move on and see other horizons ahead. They can realize that what has hindered them up to this point can be removed, changed, replaced by models that do a good job.

Although the process can be quite different from coach to coach and depends on both their level of training and preparedness (Berglas 2002) (Kimsey-House 2011) (Cox 2010) as well as the specifics of the cultural and social environment (Cushion 2007), here we provide a generalized view of how a coaching interaction might unfold (Fig. 9).

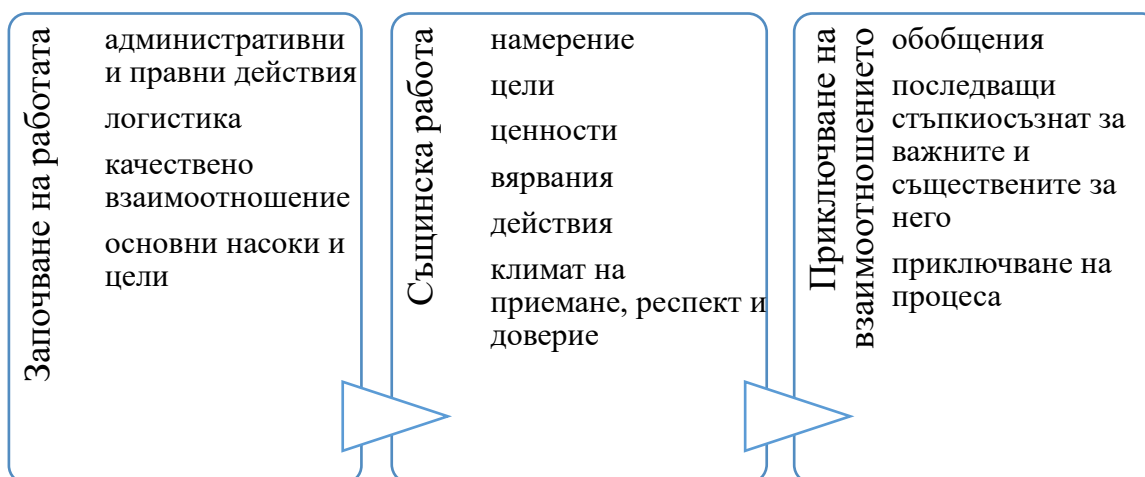


Figure 9 Process of interaction with the coaching method, own interpretation

1.2.2.1 *Initial phase: initiation*

Coaching is a dyadic⁸ relationship in which the two participants are on equal footing. Like any dyadic relationship, coaching is characterized by a relationship between the two people that depends on both the time spent together as coach and client and the emotional connection between the two. Research shows that the quality of this relationship is a prerequisite for positive coaching outcomes (Ackerman 2003) (Baron 2009). In certain cases, undesirable side effects of coaching occur, such as the client not achieving goals and the coach experiencing emotional imbalance and frustration. It is therefore of particular importance at this initial stage to lay the foundations for a healthy and quality relationship. As a basis, we take the information from the specialized training for the coach diploma of 350 hours. (Noble Manhattan 2007).

1. **Initial contact.** Whether the coaching is commissioned by an employer or initiated by the individual, it always starts with initial contact. At this time a decision is made (by both parties) as to whether they want to work together. Neither the client nor the coach can work together in every situation. There may be a mismatch in terms of expectations, working method, even the so unexplained "chemistry" between the two, and simply an inability to meet financially due to certain budget constraints. This is usually the point at which a decision is made by both parties as to whether the meetings will take place.
2. **Initial introductions and "profile take down".** This is the moment when the two get to know each other and get to know each other somewhat. This is where the field of honesty, straightforwardness, acceptance, respect and consideration begins to be created, where coach and client can truly be themselves (Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory 1951). And this is usually the second point at which client and coach decide whether they can work together. This is usually the beginning of the actual personal and professional development work in that relationship. The coach already has sufficient information about the client and can individualize the work according to these details. The information may include values, beliefs, goals of the client, character type, preferred representational system and many other details.
3. **Formalize the relationship with a contract or agreement** (see [Annex 2](#)) if desired by the parties.

⁸ In psychology, sociology and other sciences, the term dyadic (dyad) relationship is used to define a group of two people, i.e. the smallest group in the social (Fotev 2002)

4. **Setting a framework for the relationship**, duration, meeting frequency/schedule, ground rules and guidelines to facilitate the process. Give the word for compliance by both parties and follow up on this.
5. **Establish basic intentions**, select core area(s) of work and major goals.
6. **Discuss the client's personal preferences and attitudes** about some of the work methods based on the principles of respect, consideration and positive regard for the client. For example, incorporating meditations, movement and/or art into the work.

1.2.5.2. Second phase: actual work

The process to be followed in each individual meeting can be broadly outlined (as it is neither necessary nor possible to always follow) as follows:

1. **Inner harmonization and "centering"**, presence in the here and now. What is past is past. The future has not yet arrived.
2. **Discussion of lessons**, realizations and/or behaviors that have been tried in relation to personal and professional development work between the previous meeting and this one.
3. **Setting the intention for the meeting.**
4. **Determine the focus** of the issue under consideration.
5. **Setting goals for the meeting.**
6. **Monitoring during the work for harmony** between mind, emotions, body and spirit of both the client and the coach's own.
7. **Constant focus on the goals** that are fulfilling the intent.
8. **Using different techniques from psychology**, coaching, art therapy, NLP, mediation, meditation, etc., depending on the specific needs of the client/situation and the coach's preparedness.
9. **Maintaining a field of honesty, forthrightness, acceptance, respect and consideration** in which both coach and client can be their true selves.
10. **Summarising meta-learning**: benefits, lessons and ideas for experimentation generated during the meeting.

11. **Assigning work on the issues discussed** is the responsibility of the client, and is for the time between the current and next meeting.

1.2.5.3. Final phase: completion of the interaction with the coaching method

1. **Generalizing meta-learning** to interaction time
2. **Discuss next steps to** achieve/sustain the result
3. **Set follow-up meetings to monitor the** process
4. **Completing the process with attention to the client's inner harmony and peace**

It is very important that the whole process, whether it is one meeting, a short-term intervention (within 3 to 6 months) or a long-term project (12 months or more), has a structure so that the client can feel a sense of completion and wholeness.

1.2.3. Coaching models

Due to the rapid expansion of the scope of this profession, coaching includes different methods, methodologies, tools that depend on the skills, knowledge and preferences of the coaches themselves, with different results in the interaction. Different models are used in practice which, as mentioned, without being mandatory, help to structure the work. Some of them are TGROW, SCORE, WHAT, STEPPPA, SUCCESS, TOTE. Here we offer diagrams of three of the models mentioned and brief guidelines for working with them along with possible coaching questions:

1.2.3.1. Model SCORE (R. a. Dilts 2000)

(symptoms -> causes -> outcomes -> resources -> effects)



Figure 10 The SCORE model, Robert Dilts and Judith DeLozier, Encyclopedia of Systemic Neuro-Linguistic Programming and NLP New Coding, 2000

The model enables the problem/situation solving process to consider each possible problem or situation as consisting of 5 stages.

1. Symptoms: these are the immediate signs that tell you there's a problem. Possible issues to work with the symptoms are:

What doesn't work?

What do you want to change?

2. Causes: which may be the conditions preceding the problem that led to the symptoms, the intentions behind the behavior giving rise to the problem, or current limiting beliefs. Possible issues to work with are:

What are the main reasons?

What's stopping you from fixing that?

Who or what benefits from not fixing this?

3. Outcomes: the desired result or goals the client wants to get to. Possible questions to work with are:

What do you want instead of the problem?

Where do you want to go?

4. Resources: the qualities, abilities, reserves and assistance that the customer can use to solve the problem. These can be past, present or future. Possible issues to work with are:

What skills/money/equipment/contacts do you have that will help you solve your problem?

Have you encountered this problem before? How did you solve it?

5. Effects: long-term, systemic and higher-level results. Possible issues to work with are:
What will it do for you/your team/your organization to achieve your goal?

How will achieving your result change things?

What will you learn from the happening of this result?

1.2.3.2. *Model T.O.T.E* (A. Lazarov 2013)

(Test -> Operate -> Test -> Exit)

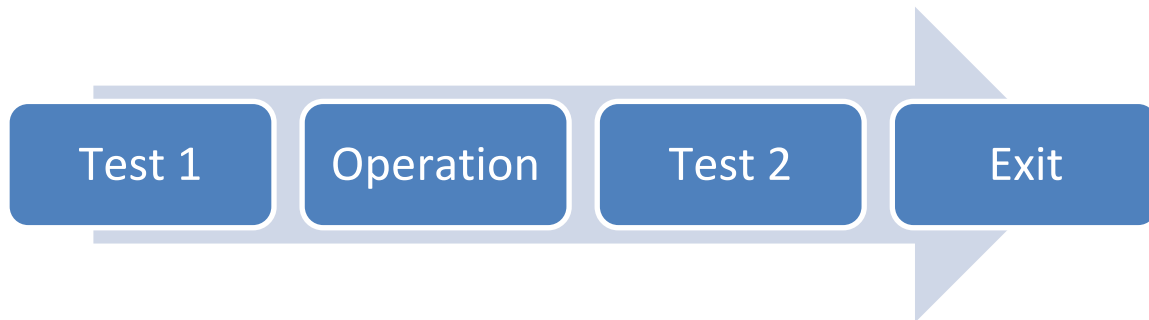


Figure 11 The T.O.T.E. model. Angel Lazarov, NLP Maysotr Practitioner Training, 2013

1. The first test: test 1 is the trigger that starts the strategy. It establishes the "submitted before test" criteria and is used as the standard for the second test (test 2).
2. Operation.
3. The second test: test 2 is a comparison of some aspects of the available data with the criteria established by the first test. The two things compared must be represented in the same representational system.
4. The exit point or decision point or choice point is the point of presentation of the test results. If there is a match, the strategy has worked. If there is a mismatch, the strategy starts again with step one (test 1) and goes through the steps again.

1.2.3.3. TROW (Coaching 2014)

(target -> goal -> reality -> options -> way ahead)

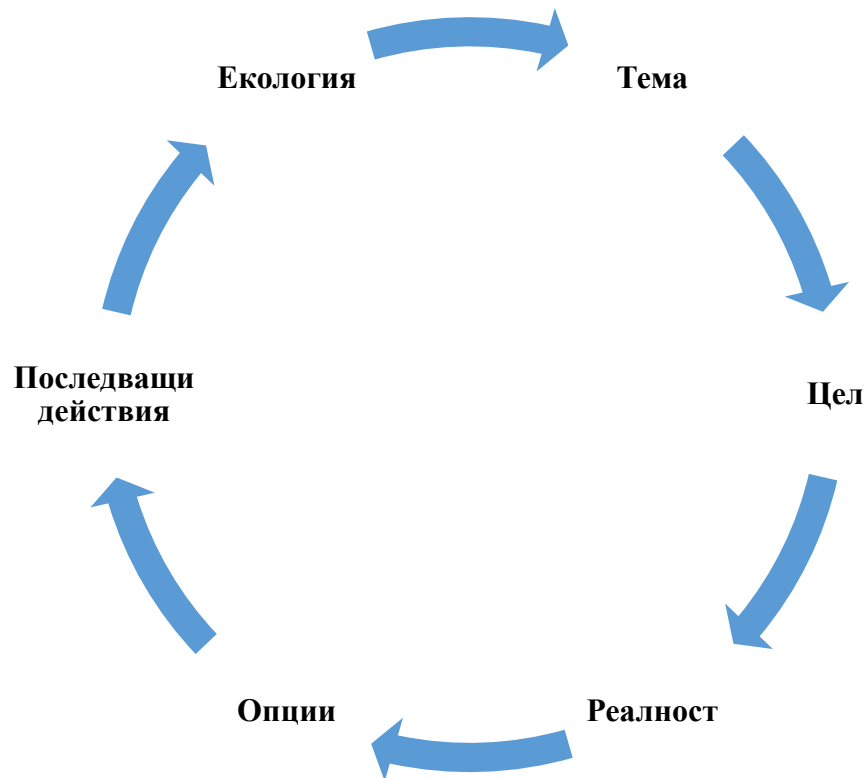


Figure 12 The TGROW(N) Noble Manhattan Coaching Model, Graduate Coach Training

This is one of the most commonly used coaching models. Its purpose is to provide a framework in which the leader has the opportunity to connect with him/herself and set an intention to get a specific result in a given coaching session. Inexperienced and/or untrained coaches often take a superficial approach and use the model as a crutch so they can ask their next question. Mechanical use of the model should be avoided. The executive coaching process is not about asking a series of questions to elicit intellectual responses from the client. There is a deep level to the process that is invisible at first sight. In it, the client can access parts of their mind that have been hidden, repressed, inaccessible. It is these unconscious parts of the leader's mind that have hitherto produced the negative, underperforming and often demotivating results in both his professional and personal life. They have been the obstacle to his/her self-realization.

The more experienced the coach, the more creatively he or she can use the model. He can combine any number of techniques - visualizations, meditation, art therapy, neuro-linguistic

programming, psychodrama, Gestalt, NLP - to achieve the desired results. We emphasize that in a coaching relationship it is extremely important and necessary to create a space of acceptance, understanding, neutrality and respect in which both parties - client and coach - can give their best (Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957). In no case should sessions be seen as mere conversations. They are a valuable tool for personal and professional self-development and have the potential to bring about transformative change in the leader.

I. **TOPIC** Practice shows that very often the appropriate choice of topic is the main condition for achieving success in the session. This is the point at which it is important for the client to connect with him/herself and determine, supported by the coach, what he/she wants to get as a result at the end of the session. Some questions that can help the process are:

- What is the question you are putting on the table today?
- What is limiting you right now in life or work?
- What is the topic you want to stir up?

II. **PURPOSE** This is the specific outcome of the session. What is important is the goal:

- ✓ clear so that the customer knows where he is going
- ✓ be measurable in order to track the outcome and take timely corrective action if necessary
- ✓ to be positive, to have the desire and energy to strive for it
- ✓ to be at least 50% achievable so that it does not feel like it is doomed to failure
- ✓ be meaningful, in line with its values and prioritized

Questions that can support the process:

- What would constitute a satisfactory outcome of today's meeting?
- Which question do you want to leave the meeting with today?
- How do you see the success of today's session?

III. **REALITY** We look for what the current situation is in the client's life so we can have a starting point for the desired change. Possible questions:

- What's happening with the moment in your life?

- What has already been done?
- What are the results of these actions so far?

IV. OPTIONS These are not things that the client is bound to. At this stage, work is done to change the perspective, to shake a limiting belief, to engage the creative part, to raise the energy.

- What would you do if you didn't care about the opinions of others?
- How would you act if you had all the money and all the time in the world?
- What advice would you give to a loved/trusted one?

V. NEXT STEPS As the Chinese proverb says: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step". That's why it's important to leave with 1-2 concrete and simple enough steps to follow and gain confidence.

- What small specific thing do you want to do towards your goal?
- What action would support you every day on the way to your goal?

VI. COMPLIANCE CHECK It is important to determine if the actions the client is committing to are consistent with their values and intent. Possible questions relate to the level of joy, energy, happiness, meaning.

It should be noted that even the use of coaching models is not a necessary and sufficient condition for the success of an interaction based on the coaching method. It is important that the coach is specially trained and experienced. These are characteristics that clients greatly value and look for when deciding to work with a coach (Baron 2009). It is also important that the coach is committed, open to communication, puts personal energy into the relationship and is honest and open (Ackerman 2003). Otherwise, undesirable side effects of coaching are often observed.

1.2.4. Types of coaching

Since there are many classifications of the types of coaching, we will only focus here on some of them, which give clarity on this widely used method of personal and professional development. As a basis for the discussion of the topic we take the detailed classification described in the "Complete Book of Coaching". (Cox 2010).

1.2.4.1. According to the place in the organization: external, internal, manager-coach, self-coaching

The types of coaching are determined by the people doing the coaching - whether they are external or internal to the organisation (Noble Manhattan 2007).

Organizations can choose, broadly speaking, from four types of coaches:

- **An external coach**, i.e. a coach from outside the organization who is hired to perform this service. This can be arranged on-site at the organisation or online via some platform e.g. Skype, Viber, phone.
- **Internal coach**, i.e. an employee in the organization who is outside the management team and whose job description includes coaching employees (peer coaching).
- **The line manager/supervisor as coach**, which is increasingly common and sought after as a function of managers and
- **Self-coaching**, in which a person is coached only by using different techniques and approaches instead of the typical face-to-face sessions.

The most important documented benefits of an external coach are a greater sense of security, privacy and trust on the part of the client. In addition, there is a lesser degree of 'misguidedness' from an organisational point of view on the part of the coach, which allows the coach to be more objective and largely able to be non-judgmental and non-judgemental, i.e. more accepting and open to the client. Furthermore, in the case that we are talking about a true professional external coach, this is more of a person with special training, trained and with the skills necessary to be able to support the client. Usually the external coach has much more experience, which can be beneficial and lead to better decisions, deeper understanding and more realizations.

On the other hand, in-house coaches can be more accessible⁹, available to clients at all times, with greater clarity on company policies and culture, organization structure, employee roles, and overall infrastructure. Internal coaches can observe the client in a work setting¹⁰. Also the management of organizations still consider them cheaper.

⁹ There are still no detailed studies worldwide and in Bulgaria on this topic. The practice in Bulgaria so far shows that the cost of hiring an external coach is not much higher than the cost of hiring an internal coach, although there is no research on this issue yet.

¹⁰ This can also be arranged with an external coach if deemed necessary by the organisation. A confidentiality agreement is usually signed in such cases.

In three studies of the effectiveness of people who act as coaches (J. V. Segers, Structuring and Understanding the Coaching Industry: The Coaching Cube 2011) in relation to the division we have used to date to measure coaching effectiveness, the research literature uses two sets of variables:

1. Process outcomes related to organisational performance (e.g. achievement of targets, increase in sales) and
2. Human factors outcomes (e.g., well-being, increased self-confidence, more joy, reduced stress levels)

Although the three studies in question have the limitation of small representativeness (mean $N=35.25$) and further research is needed, the following picture can be painted: external coaching is more effective in terms of achieving goals than internal coaching. However, internal coaching helps clients compared to a control group of employees who did not use coaching. This advantage of external coaching is explained by clients perceiving external coaches with more trust. In terms of increasing well-being, no similar trend was observed (J. V. Segers, Structuring and Understanding the Coaching Industry: The Coaching Cube 2011).

Self-coaching is also perceived with more credibility than internal coaching and is as effective as external coaching in terms of reaching goals. External coaching is perceived as more satisfying than both internal and self coaching.

Studies show (Clutterbuck 2006) that, depending on where the organisation is in the process of introducing coaching as a development method, it initially relies on external coaches. At this stage, management is still considered to be an activity distinct from coaching and not inherently. Then, when the coaching culture is introduced, internal coaches are developed or recruited, and managers are trained to interact as coaches. In the final stage of introducing the coaching culture, external coaches are hired primarily to develop the management team and valued staff, as well as to guide the direction of the coaching culture. On the other hand, internal coaches interact with their colleagues and across functions and levels in the organization.

The profession of coaching is developing very dynamically due to the high effectiveness of the method. Different types are emerging, serving both broader groups (e.g. business, personal, health, for parents) and quite narrow niches (e.g. for parents raising young people aged 13 to 18 on their own, for team managers in hospitality management).

Each coach decides for himself what way of working he would choose and with what group of people he would work. Some prefer to focus on a narrow group of people, while others prefer to work with people with different interests and expressions in life. This general division, in fact, does not matter to the quality of the coach's work, as long as the coach is professional and does the job for which the client has sought him or her out.

In this regard, coaching could be classified into the following areas:

1.1.4.2. According to the intended use

1. **Personal coaching** has as subjects people who would like to work on themselves and change their life in its entirety, looking at different areas in their unity or focusing on a particular area.
2. **Business coaching** facilitates teams (can be horizontal, e.g. first line managers or vertical, e.g. Sales or HR team) to build, coalesce, be effective and generally achieve those results that the organization deems necessary and useful.
3. **Coaching for leaders**, executive coaching, is for the benefit of key figures in organizations, for-profit and non-profit, political parties, social groups, etc. The expectations on these people are usually huge, the pressures are often very great. They rarely have someone in the organization who can partner with them on an equal footing in situations where they need a different perspective, feedback, a conversation to uncover new opportunities, and/or hold their focus of responsibility, engagement, and attention. This is why this aspect of coaching is usually seen as a separate area of work.

1.1.4.3. According to the qualification and professional field of activity of the coach: with elements of NLP¹¹, with elements of psychodrama, Gestalt

Here the classification can be particularly broad because of the different expertise with which coaches enter into relationships with their clients.

Some coaches are psychologists by training, others are managers, NLP practitioners, trainers, doctors, lawyers, mediators, psychiatrists, clergy, etc. These professionals bring their expertise to their work with clients. The enrichment of the "arsenal", i.e. the development of the coach

¹¹ Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) is an approach that explores the connections between the way a person's body, physiology and brain work (neuro), the words and verbal behaviors used (linguistic) and the patterns of thought and action, the patterns of behavior (programming). It is used to manifest fuller human potential by modeling successful personal and professional strategies or using working business and psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, cognitive-behavioral models.

himself as such, can help him immensely in his work with the client, because there is an opportunity for different viewpoints and perspectives.

One of the advantages and at the same time one of the biggest limitations in the profession is the lack of uniform and generally accepted requirements for the training, qualification and practice of coaching. Unlike most of the aforementioned professions (psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors, lawyers, etc.), where there are established standards and requirements that are quite similar in any university and any country in the world, with coaching, at the moment, the practice is quite different.

1.2.5. Reasons why coaching is not more widespread.

There are many cases where interaction based on the use of coaching is not appropriate and is not successful. Hundreds of thousands of people in the world call themselves "coach" and work with clients and here is the first question: how professionally do these people work, what code of ethics do they follow (if they do), how did they get their qualifications and what personal qualities do they have to help their clients achieve theirs. Lots of questions and in recent years several internationally recognised organisations (such as the International Coach Federation, the International Institute of Coaching and Mentoring, the International Registry of Coaches and Mentors) have been active in the direction of training coaches, their continuing professional development, adherence to certain standards and response to certain strict criteria they set for their members. These actions are currently not enough to create an organisation in the profession.

Some of the limitations of using coaching:

1. **Coaching is still underdeveloped as a profession.** It still faces most competition not from other professions, for example psychologists, psychoanalysts, analysts or counsellors, but from informal conversations. For solving problems, both professional and personal, and achieving goals, people still turn first to colleagues (42%) and family (36%). (ICF 2009) Unlike other professions that have existed for millennia, coaching is the product of the desire to develop people and organisations over the last 20 - 30 years. According to Tobias (Tobias 1996), the term executive coaching first appeared in the literature in the late 1980s. In the beginning, it was used so that "the diamond in the rough (the key figure in the business being coached) could be polished". Since then, globally, hundreds of thousands of people define themselves as coaches.

2. **Coaching is not sufficiently regulated as a profession.** And according to the author it is difficult to be regulated because it is practiced by people with extremely diverse education, experience, qualifications. There are no independent bodies to give accreditation. All such bodies that the author has found information about over the years are private benefit organisations and probably could not be objective enough, although some of them (e.g. ICF) have maintained a standard for their staff for years. There are no uniform registers in which to search for coaches suitable for a particular individual. Practice shows that at this stage in Bulgaria it is usually relying on contacts and social media.
3. **Coaching is one of the most expensive methods to develop people's potential.** It has been commonly used and is still used to develop key figures in business and non-profit organizations. It is only for a narrow circle of select leaders that it is relied upon for the development of organizations as a whole. These people are also the most motivated to develop and use their capabilities more fully. In our country, organizations are still motivated by direct financial measures. Very rarely, and mainly international corporations, have realised the importance of the human factor for the success of their business. And while giants like Google officially have an "Executive Director of Happiness"¹², who makes sure that the workplace is considered a happy place. The idea is that happy employees exhibit more skills that indirectly positively impact the organizations financial performance. In our country, very little money is spent on people development (this is also one of the first items to be cut in a crisis situation like we have been in for the last 2 years). Such practices of consistent and organized development of even just the key figures in the business are almost non-existent for micro, small and even medium enterprises. To the extent that there are trainings (and here we include coaching interactions, although they are not trainings in the conventional sense), they tend to be sporadic and as a reward for good work (e.g. team building where people go mainly to have fun and quite incidentally to improve a skill or behaviour) rather than a clear policy for developing human potential and talent.
4. There is a great **distrust of this kind of interaction.** Our culture and mores often do not allow us to seek support for personal development. It is normalised to use a trainer

¹² Chief Happiness Officer, CHO

for physical training, to use a doctor for health problems (although self-medication is very often practised here too). And it is still not considered normal to work with a psychologist to enhance mental health or with a personal or business coach for personal development and fuller human potential. Certainly, there has been movement in this direction in the last 5-6 years, especially as a result of the coaching culture brought to our country by large English-speaking multinational corporations.

5. As research has shown, while **coaching is the preferred method for leaders** compared to internal and external training, workshops, seminars, webinars, conferences, mentoring, job rotations, and other methods considered in the study because it is highly individualized and tailored to each leader's agenda and needs. On the other hand, **standard trainings and workshops remain the preferred choice for HR directors** (Rekalde 2017). On the one hand, this may be due to the difficulty of changing stereotypes, the fact that standard leadership programmes are easier to plan and control, on the third they are much cheaper and thus can be more easily approved for funding.
6. Too often in organisations, **coaching is applied administratively**, without asking for clients' consent, "forced" as this intervention is often described. Particularly for people in key positions who are often self-confident and/or feel successful and believe in "free will" and/or do not have the practice of being both self-sufficient and trusting another person to support them through a difficult time/challenge/moving in a particular direction, it is very difficult to connect with a coach and have the most beneficial interaction take place.
7. There are **certain types of people who, as a rule, are not affected by such interventions**. Such are, for example, people high on the narcissism scale. There are studies (Tayan 2021) that among the US population 5% have narcissistic characteristics, while the percentage among CEOs is 15%, i.e. 3 times more. Such people are reluctant to change and are not suitable for coaching. If the intervention is applied "administratively", as we discussed above, then not very positive results can be expected. The negative impact may be, on the one hand, for the coachee who loses their confidence, feels they have failed and experiences high levels of stress (Berglas 2002). On the other hand for the organization that suffers financial losses from disengaged leaders. The author's experience shows that this type of people even deliberately hinder the process.

8. **Unawareness** is the next problem people encounter that prevents them from using this effective method for personal and professional development. As Jung notes in his essay "A Psychological Theory of Types" (C. Jung 1933), we humans are so close to our psyches that we do not realize how deceptive it is to feel that we know ourselves and do not seek the intervention of a specialist so that we can expand our level of awareness and function much better and in ways that are appropriate for us.

In cases where a person seeks a coach on their own, which have been increasingly common in recent years, the hurdle can be the blind spots:

- Since **there is no common database**, no common register, as is the case with lawyers, mediators, notaries, for example, one may experience great difficulties in finding the right person for oneself.
- **Confidentiality is not respected**, which is one of the fundamental prerequisites for a successful interaction. Since there are many "accidental" coaches in the profession, ethical norms are not always respected.
- **The coach is unprepared** and can do harm.
- **The customer is not persistent enough to** go the required distance.
- **The client has no supportive environment to** lean on to reinforce the results of working with the coach.
- **The client has certain psychological characteristics that do not** make him suitable for this type of work.

Although still lagging behind the world of practitioners, a similar increase in interest in coaching has been seen in the academic field. This interest is evidenced by the fact that academic publications in the period 2001-2005 increased by 266% compared to the period 1996-2000. (J. V. Segers, Structuring and Understanding the Coaching Industry: The Coaching Cube 2011).

Regardless of the limitations, coaching has become part of corporate leadership development programs and university MBA programs. Executives' performance improves after the educational program and the very resourceful feedback (J. V. Segers, Workplace and executive coaching: A bibliography from the scholarly business literature 2011). The obvious risk of this intense growth of interest in coaching in the practitioner and academic world is that the field lacks transparency, experiences a decline in quality of service and research is insufficient and, therefore, can become an organizational fad that is quickly passed over and forgotten. Spence

highlights the importance and necessity of understanding the state of the coaching industry to begin structuring and further maturing the profession (Spence 2006). For example, one cannot increase the quality of coach training or improve the selection process of coaches used in leadership development programs without an understanding of the characteristics of the industry.

1.3. Executive coaching : nature, specifics, approaches

This paper explores the impact of one particular segment of coaching, namely, coaching for business owners, entrepreneurs, CEOs, managers in key positions in organizations, and leaders of non-governmental organizations. Due to the lack of a generalizing term for all these functions in the Bulgarian language, we assume here to call it executive coaching¹³ or coaching for leaders. After consulting with several graduate psychologists who practice coaching, linguists and management experts, it was concluded that there is no accepted term for this type of intervention in the Bulgarian language. Therefore, even at the risk of introducing a term that is directly transferred from the English language, its use was adopted here in the interest of conveying the content.

1.3.1. Definition of executive coaching

Many authors give their own definition of the nature of coaching for business owners, entrepreneurs and CEOs. In their article, Feldman and Lankau review the concept and nature of executive coaching (EC) (D. a. Feldman 2005). They note that in earlier research, executive coaching was considered more as a technique used to correct managers' deficiencies in their task performance. Subsequently, the view has changed and in recent years executive coaching has been seen as an approach to help leaders learn and develop towards their best performance. Beginning as an approach to changing the behaviour of middle and senior managers in the 1990s, EC has proved important because it addresses issues relating to the presence of leadership skills problems, rather than so much a lack of technical skills (D. a. Feldman 2005) (Dotlich 2003). The definition of "executive" remains from the period of the original work specifically with CEOs and senior executives and, although it has been worked at the lower management levels over the years, it persists because the objectives do not change (Baron 2009). EC is an ongoing relationship that involves a process of questioning and personal

¹³ In English executive coaching

discovery to build on the client's level of awareness and responsibility. Here, for the purpose of this paper, the author draws on the following definitions, "A supportive, personalized and collaborative peer process focused on organizational performance and development, a process that also has a personal element." (Federation n.d.) and "A partnership relationship using a wide range of behavioral techniques and methods to help the client achieve a jointly identified set of goals to improve professional performance and personal satisfaction in order to enhance the effectiveness of the client and the client organization." (Kilburg, Facilitating intervention adherence in executive coaching: A model and methods. 2001). The definition offered by the author is as follows, **"A peer relationship based on acceptance, understanding and respect in which the executive coach uses a variety of techniques and methods from psychology, management, mediation and others as applicable depending on his or her training to facilitate and support his or her client in his or her personal and professional development, thereby improving leadership style, teamwork and organizational performance."**

This type of coaching is often confused with other workplace interventions. Most often these are mentoring (coaching) and training the supervisor in certain skills. Mentoring usually involves an older and more experienced mentor working with a younger colleague, his or her protégé, in relation to passing on knowledge, skills and contacts to facilitate professional growth and career assistance (Baron 2009). EC is a specific work with managers that has its own characteristics. We will discuss these below.

1.3.2. Specificity of executive coaching

Coaching for business owners, entrepreneurs and senior executives is a specific segment of coaching in general. The benefits of using this method to develop leaders can be viewed on several levels. By being owners or managers of organisations, clients have the power and responsibility to influence the future and development, vision, strategy and to shape relevant policies, not only personally and professionally, but also for their respective organisations and for society as a whole. One of the leading "gurus" in executive coaching, leadership and personal development in the US, John Whitmore, has personally led programs at Google, Alphabet, Deloitte, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Barclays, Lloyds, Rolls Royce, British Airways, Novo Nordisk and Roche. According to Whitmore, the executive coaching process is highly personalized and a key tool for developing managers in successful organizations. Only those

executives who behave authentically can be successful in the long term. Processes and procedures are important, but without the right people working in an effective and efficient manner, any organization can fail (Dembkowski 2006). Whitmore stresses that the professional coach should understand the responsibility and level of commitment that they need to have and put into their work by being face to face with people who have taken on the challenge to be better, more fulfilled, more engaged and more responsive selves and in doing so change not only their future but that of the organisations they lead.

In the literature, there are various aspects that are seen as characterising the EC. Some consider the main elements of EC to be counselling on performance issues based on 360 degree feedback in order to increase the effectiveness of managers in their current positions (D. a. Feldman 2005) (D. Feldman 2001). Others emphasize the importance of the feedback that leaders receive (Hall 1999) (Dembkowski 2006). The specific relationship typical of this type of coaching is examined, namely the three-way relationship between coach, client and organisation, as often EC is commissioned by the organisation (Rossinski 2003). Timothy Galloway, one of the people who first introduced the sport term coaching in a business context, talks about awareness, trust and choice, as well as the use of coaching to develop the people in the team, as characteristics of EC (Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Work* 2000). These and similar elements considered have also been described in the psychological literature in relation to dyadic relationships (Kilburg, *Facilitating intervention adherence in executive coaching: A model and methods*. 2001).

In this paper, the author focuses on the following main characteristics of executive coaching (Figure 13):

1. **Individual development and growth work for managers.** The process is highly individualized and is based on **partnership, trust, respect and acceptance.** (Rogers, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* 1957). If at the beginning of the emergence of EC as a method, it was primarily aimed at working with managers who were not coping with their duties and it was intended to "fix" them in order to increase their effectiveness, in recent years this method has been used primarily to develop strengths and create conditions for personal and professional self-fulfilment (Athanasopoulou 2015). Every leader has their own agenda, their own challenges, goals and aspirations. This agenda is the focus of the work with the coach.

It works on personal development as well as leadership skills and organisational performance (Stokes 2009).

2. **A systems perspective.** Executive coaching cannot be **viewed in isolation from the goals and interests of the organization** (The Executive Coaching Forum 2015). This method is used as part of development programmes for organisations and their leaders. It is therefore important that both the executive and the coach are aware of the organisation's goals (Athanasopoulou 2015). Usually a focus on outcomes is sought as the intention is that these outcomes for the leader are in alignment with the larger goals of the organisation.
3. **Integrity.** EC is not learning new skills or accumulating new knowledge, but is a method of **personal self-realization** through a higher degree of awareness and acceptance of oneself and one's idiosyncrasies, which helps an individual manifest differently in life, more meaning and happiness, as well as in one's work (**career development, teamwork, effective management, organizational performance**). The client is relied upon to have the answers within themselves. It turns out that in practice it is not very easy for a coach to be neutral to the client's agenda. There are too many temptations, looking and listening from the side, to give guidance, assumptions, ideas, answers hidden behind questions. Too often coaches do not have the awareness to be neutral and the discipline not to intervene when the client is searching for their answer. Many coaches come from backgrounds of psychologists, counsellors, HR professionals and are used to working in a certain way, usually steering the client in a particular direction "for their own good".

4. **Transformative method (paradigm shift).** The client very often comes with a request for change or development in a specific area, with a specific question. In the case of EC, practically all initial requests for work are in the professional field. In the coaching process, the need to change the client's thinking often arises. A change of belief system, a paradigm shift (world view, worldview, self-realization). We are used to upgrade and refresh all applications and software programs on the devices we work with. And very rarely are we aware that we need to change our programs of thinking, feeling, and movement that may be outdated by several decades.

Figure 13 Characteristics of executive coaching, own interpretation

Executive coaching is a method that gives the coach extreme freedom to work with the client. It is the coach's responsibility to develop and grow, because he/she can only support the client to the extent that he/she can become aware and know themselves. In executive coaching, clients are usually very successful people in a particular field/areas and they have an extremely rich set of successful strategies for life and work. Therefore, executive coaches are a very special group of people with a high degree of self-awareness and self-confidence and usually with a



specific psychological background (Berglas 2002). As already mentioned the profession of "coach" is not regulated and professionals with different skills and qualifications are called coaches. In a certain percentage of cases, undesirable effects of EC have been observed, which we will discuss below.

1.3.3. Comparison with other commonly used methods of leader development

1.3.3.1. *Mentoring*

Mentoring is a process of informal transmission of knowledge, of social capital, as defined in sociology, i.e. an increase in the degree of collective knowledge and the corresponding economic benefits are expected as a consequence of preferential treatment and cooperation between individuals and groups, as well as the psychological support received by the mentee in relation to work, career and professional development. Mentoring involves informal communication, usually face-to-face, but also remotely, e.g. with people in different offices and countries, over a relatively long period of time (6 months - 2 years) between a person who is assumed to have more relevant knowledge, wisdom and/or experience (the mentee/mentor) and a person/group who is assumed to have less (the protégé/mentoree) (Bozeman 2013). Usually the guardian is more senior in the hierarchy of the organization. He or she is often an expert in the area in which the protégé wants to improve performance and/or develop. We can summarize that mentoring involves two functions: career and psychosocial. The career function involves a range of behaviours, including training protégés, nurturing their progress, increasing their interaction with others in the organisation, including at higher levels, and offering protection as a way of helping them prepare for hierarchical advancement within their organisations. Psychosocial functions include certain behaviors such as providing friendship and networking that enhance the protégé's professional and personal growth, identity, and self-esteem (Baron 2009).

It is worth noting here that the mentor may, despite his knowledge and skills, fail to mentor his protégé in a way that gets the best results from him. Mentors are usually not trained to do this or are only given short courses and guidance.

1.3.3.2. *Training*

Training is, on the one hand, an organized activity whose purpose is to provide information and/or instruction in order to raise the level of performance of the trainee and/or to acquire the knowledge, skills or competencies necessary for him to perform his job well. Training, on the other hand, is the process of the learner acquiring knowledge, skills and competencies as a result of being trained to it in practical specific useful competencies. Training has the specific objective of improving skills, knowledge, efficiency, capacity, productivity, performance. It is the basis of the existing educational system in our schools and higher education institutions. It

is also necessary in a work environment to prepare people for certain activities, positions, skills as part of their professional development.

There are hundreds of types of training, e.g. on-the-job and off-the-job, for social (soft) skills, technical, physical, organized by employers and their organizations, by NGOs, by governments, etc. In recent years, more and more people are turning to self-learning on the Internet in the form of webinars, courses, seminars. There are many cases where this learning takes place outside working hours and outside the organisations where people work (Bell 2017). The training focuses on the acquisition of general cognitive abilities rather than specific performances in specific situations. An effective trainer helps a person develop new strategies for thinking and acting. The focus of training is on new learning rather than on improving previous performance.

Our cognitive abilities are linked to mental maps, plans or strategies that lead to success. They guide how actions are selected and considered. Capabilities include mastering whole classes of behaviors, i.e., knowing how to do something. While some behaviors are simply reflexive responses to environmental stimuli, most of our actions are not. Many of our behaviors come from "mental maps" and other internal processes whose source is in our minds. This is a level of experience that transcends our perceptions of our immediate environment. For example, we may make drawings of people who are not in the room we are in. We can recall conversations and events that took place years ago. We can imagine events that may happen years from now. Possibilities come from developing a mental map that allows us to select and organize groups of individual behaviors.

Abilities have to do with the mental strategies and maps that people develop to guide their specific behaviors. Simply engaging in learning does not guarantee that learning will take place. It is our cognitive strategies that determine how we select and implement certain behaviors. These strategies determine whether the learner actually develops the abilities necessary to continuously and repeatedly perform the behavioral skill he or she is practicing. The degree to which people are able to generalize something to new situations outside the context in which they originally learned it is a consequence of their mental capacity, their willingness to learn, their attitude toward the process, their individual plasticity of mind (Boyd 2015). The function of ability is to provide the perception and direction needed to achieve specific goals. Developing abilities involves creating cognitive maps and strategies. According to the model of neurological levels (R. Dilts, A Brief History of Logical Levels 2014), abilities stand between

our beliefs and our behavior. Our abilities are what allow us to translate our beliefs and values into actual behavior.

Considering learning at a deeper level - an external side, which is related to the acquisition of new abilities and skills, and an internal side, which is related to our mental preparation on how to use them - was proposed by Timothy Gallwey (Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis: The Classic Guide to the Mental Side of Peak Performance* 1997) (Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Work* 2000). The "Inner Game" has to do with physical skills. For example, if you are an entrepreneur, how to organize your business, how to set goals, how to report financial results, etc. The "inner game," on the other hand, has to do with your psychological attitude toward what you do. This includes your attitude, your confidence in yourself and your team, your ability to concentrate effectively, to cope with mistakes and under intense pressure, etc. When the outer and inner game work together, there is a seeming calm, fluidity and perfection in actions, what psychologist Mihai Csikszentmihalyi first called in 1975 "in the flow" or "in the zone" (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). It is the mental state of action in which the person performing an activity is fully immersed in a sense of energetic focus, full participation and enjoyment in the process of the activity. Essentially, flow is characterized by the complete absorption of what one is learning and the resulting loss in the sense of space and time. Some indicators that your inner game is in order and that you are in "the zone" are a sense of confidence and lack of anxiety and self-doubt, no fear of failure or self-consciousness about achieving your goals, an emphasis on beautiful and excellent execution that comes effortlessly and without having to think about it.

1.3.3.3. Consulting

Counselling is a joint work between a counsellor and a client. Professional counsellors help clients identify their goals and find potential solutions, improve their communication and coping skills in a variety of situations. The process usually ends when the client finds an answer/solution to the issue for which they have sought the counselor's help or that issue has become manageable. Professional counsellors usually have specialised training (psychology, people management, medicine, etc.) and are trained to work individually or with groups of people. Depending on the specifics of the counseling, it can be divided into different types - business, anger management, relationship, family, etc.

Individual counselling is an opportunity for a person to receive professional support in difficult life situations and to cope with them, e.g. anger management, stress management, addictions to drugs and other substances, depression, problems in marriage, between children and parents, at school and at work. Working in a group gives a person the confidence that they are not alone and alone in the situation that is causing emotional stresses. By having the opportunity to observe from the side situations similar to one's own while working with others in the group, one can better understand the situation, see and hear different perspectives, and find new and different solutions for oneself. Clients are encouraged to talk about themselves, their problems, go to the past to discuss issues related to emotional disorders, look for connections between traumas and present manifestations, and seek solutions to problems. In coaching, the focus is mainly in the present and awareness is sought, taking responsibility on the part of the client, and this is done in a space of trust that the client has the answers within themselves, and the coach creates the conditions for the client to be able to reach them.

1.3.3.4. Therapy/Psychotherapy

The term therapy comes from the Greek and Latin languages and literally means treatment, cure. It usually deals with health problems for which a doctor has previously been consulted and a diagnosis made.

Psychologists use the term therapy to refer to therapy in the form of talk, i.e. psychotherapy. In this context, therapy means a therapeutic (healing) interaction between a client (individual or in a group) and a trained psychologist, for which there are different regulations in different countries. The problems and situations that are addressed are usually psychological, i.e. they are related to mental functions and behaviours. These problems are considered in the context of causes, influences, behaviours and, after careful consideration, a course of treatment is prescribed. Depending on their qualifications, therapists may be psychologists, psychiatrists, clinical social workers, counsellors, hypnotherapists, family counsellors, kinesiotherapists, etc. Many authors find a certain similarity between psychotherapy and coaching. In both cases, it is about an individual dyadic (dyadic) relationship. Both processes aim to assist clients in how their cognitive and emotional reactions prevent them from being and expressing themselves (Hodgetts 2002). But the two methods are different and these are some of the differences:

- EC is working with supervisors primarily to improve their performance in a work environment as opposed to a psychotherapeutic process (Peltier 2009);

- With EC, the organization often pays for the development of its key executives and this creates a financial relationship and responsibility between the organization and the executive coach (Kilburg, Facilitating intervention adherence in executive coaching: A model and methods. 2001);
- EC focuses on the present and the future as opposed to therapy whose focus is the client's past;
- EC focuses on action as opposed to therapy;
- Therapy typically addresses much deeper personality issues and resistance to change, including limiting beliefs and behaviors, dysfunctional personality characteristics (Kilburg, Facilitating intervention adherence in executive coaching: A model and methods. 2001) (Grassmann 2016).

Although executive coaches are not therapists, practice and research show that if they do not have specific psychological training, they can create major problems for the client, the organization and themselves (Berglas 2002) (Grassmann 2016). We will consider these side effects separately.

1.3.4. Approaches to executive coaching

Each coach (and executive coach in particular) uses approaches and methods from applied psychology, cognitive behavioral therapy, positive psychology, experiential therapy, Gestalt therapy, outcome-focused therapy, role-playing, mediation, person-centered therapy, art therapy, psychodrama, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), and others in which he or she is trained in the methodology of work.

Different authors classify the approaches for implementing executive coaching from different perspectives. For the purpose of this paper, the author will consider a classification that draws on the application of different types of psychological approaches to the work of the professional coach (D. a. Feldman 2005). This classification is based on the ideas of Bruce Peltier, who uses his extensive experience in both clinical psychology and business (Peltier 2009).

Peltier establishes a clear framework within which he uses psychological terms and knowledge in the field of EC.

1.3.4.1. Developmental psychology and development of adult individuals

Although this approach may not be the most intuitive for coaches, developmental psychology provides the opportunity to avoid judgment of certain client behaviors. And this, as we have already discussed, is particularly important with EC. It is important that the client feels accepted and respected. Instead of judgment, the coach can consider how the client's behaviors are logical and expected from a psychological perspective and should not be punished or even considered pathological. We humans are usually at different places on our personal path of development and growth. And usually the biggest breakthroughs and the fastest growth are in moments of personal or professional crisis. And coaches can keep this in mind. This approach can be especially helpful when working with topics such as: empathy, trust in self and others, self-confidence and self-esteem, self-awareness, interpersonal intimacy, independence of thought and action.

1.3.4.2. Psycho dynamic approach

According to Freud's theory, people (in this case leaders) perceive reality refracted through their needs, wants, beliefs, fantasies, desires. It is extremely important that the client is able to become aware of their filters and perceive reality as "objectively" as possible (as far as we can talk about objective reality). The process of executive coaching is usually oriented towards achieving certain goals and results. Moreover, prolonged coaching interactions are not often welcomed in work environments. With knowledge and awareness of the psycho-dynamic approach, the coach can support their client in situations where certain behaviours or perceptions cannot be logically explained by the client. Very often in a work environment, prepared and professional managers fail (Gallup 2015). This may be due to unconscious desires, fears, concerns and limiting beliefs coming to light in the coaching process. This approach is highly appropriate when working with leaders' defense mechanisms:

- **Adaptive mechanisms:** altruism, humor, sublimation, substitution, identification.
- **Defence mechanisms:** denial, isolation, repression
- **Distorting reality:** rationalization, intellectualization, projection
- **Defense mechanisms that make people react strangely:** complaining and refusing help, regression, conversion, provocation

In addition, the psycho-dynamic approach is valuable for improving interpersonal relationships, leadership skills, creating effective relationships, selecting appropriate professionals for specific positions and roles, improving leaders' self-knowledge, and addressing behaviors that

set them up for failure such as controlling, distrusting, procrastinating, and failing to listen, understand, and connect with other people.

Such a move out of the comfort zone can be accompanied by great resistance on the part of the client and the coach should be prepared for it.

1.3.4.3. A behaviorist approach

In the context of coaching, this approach explains viewing the coaching interaction as an "experiment." Goals and desired outcomes are set at the outset and the path to achieving them is considered an experiment, specific to each client and tailored to their pace and rhythm. On the fly, results are monitored and corrective actions are implemented by reinforcing behaviors and actions that work and avoiding those that stop, hinder and obstruct. The frustrations and disappointments in our lives and work are very often the result of what Stephen Kerr called "the folly of rewarding A while hoping for B" (Kerr 1997). Coaching can help the client to clarify what he or she wants and what outcomes he or she expects, which actions are welcomed as appropriate and which are avoided (even punished) as inappropriate. When the desired behavior is so drastically different from what has been done or frighteningly unknown, it can be broken down into smaller and easier to implement actions. This process can be facilitated tremendously by the professional coach.

1.3.4.4. Cognitive approach

It is based on cognitive psychology, which studies the way the brain works and the patterns it creates. It is a complex field of study, involving intellectual processes such as memory, perception, language formation and the roles of different brain functions. The cognitive approach to coaching enables executive coach practitioners to train their clients to observe their own thoughts. By changing the way they perceive their thoughts, clients can access transformative experiences, and can manage their conscious emotions and behaviors triggered by certain thought processes and patterns. This approach uses pictures, working with visualizations and imagination.

1.3.4.5. Existential approach

In this typically Western approach, the executive coach considers and respects each client as an individual. He or she helps the client to become aware of his or her understandings, mindset, strengths and weaknesses, and to accept him or herself for who he or she is, along with his or

her perceptions and beliefs. The coach helps clients understand what is truly important and valuable to them, make their own informed choices, and take responsibility for them accordingly. In the existential approach it is important to act, to take risks, to participate. The coach using this approach observes the ways in which the client withdraws into themselves, avoids acting and participating, shrinks, dulls their feelings and emotions, avoids conflict and confrontation. Here the work is towards the client committing to a specific plan of action towards expansion, participation and taking responsibility and sticking to it, following their own path.

1.3.4.6. The approach based on social psychology

Social psychology studies how we interact with and influence other people. We often think we are much more self-sufficient, self-sufficient and independent than we really are. The executive coach who uses the advances of social psychology can be helpful to clients with their ability to help them view the situations they are working on as experiments. He can invite his clients to be curious and participate in these experiments. He can provoke his clients to look at situations and problems, to study them so they can change them. This may not happen the first time. It is important not to punish mistakes, but to expect and even celebrate them because they lead to a solution. The executive coach can encourage clients to recognize aspects of the environment that they can change to achieve a more acceptable outcome. He can teach clients how to recognize how certain relationships affect them and how to interact more successfully. He can train them to notice how their brain uses incomplete, insufficient, inaccurate information to draw certain conclusions, often based on past experience. It can work on the ways clients perceive, limit and hinder themselves, succumb to outdated understandings and ideas and how to present (sell) themselves, their ideas, work and creativity. This includes appearance, the way they speak, stand, write, communicate, and make eye contact. And, of course, one can work on developing emotional intelligence, empathy, understanding, acceptance, awareness, leadership skills (Goleman, *The Focused Leader* 2020).

1.3.4.7. The human-centred approach

This is the approach that is adopted as the theoretical basis in this paper¹⁴. Carl Rogers, the originator of the person-centred approach, has been a leading theorist and practitioner in

¹⁴ Usually, experienced professional coaches work with different approaches depending on the specific situation. Even in the same situation, the dynamics of the conversation may require the use of a series of different approaches.

humanistic psychology for almost 50 years. It is no coincidence that he is addressed not as "Dr. Rogers" but as "Mr. Rogers." His ideas provide a foundational methodology in the training of psychologists, counselors, and teachers. It is one of the approaches that most influenced both individual and group counseling methodologically in the last half of the 20th century. Although not a widely known fact, a major feature of its therapy is the empirical testing of the basic conditions associated with personal change in highly functional, i.e. physically and mentally healthy, individuals. These conditions are: sincerity, unconditional positive regard, and empathy-based acceptance and understanding. Creating a space in which the client is able to trust and disclose is essential. This seems to make the Rogerian approach an obvious choice for executive coaches and yet this particular approach has not received enough attention in the literature. The social (soft) skills of coaches are proving to be extremely important in working with clients. In his book *If Aristotle Ran General Motors*, Tom Morris writes, "relationships run the world." "What used to be called the 'soft issues' of business will increasingly be what emerges as significant to sustainable excellence in every industry in the world as we move into the new century. Eventually - once technology has taken hold, once organisations are well structured and all processes are running smoothly - what will make or break any business will be the spirit of the people doing the work (Morris 1997). This approach is valuable in determining the qualities and skills that are needed for an executive coach to be successful. In one interpretation or another, they are embodied in the requirements of various professional coach organizations such as the International Coaching Federation (ICF) (ICF 2019), the International Community of Coaches (International Coaching Community 2019), International Standards for Mentoring and Coaching (ISMIC) (International Standards for Mentoring and Coaching Programmes (ISMCP) 2020). The main goal of this approach is openness to experience (less resistance and more awareness of reality, more trust in oneself, the assumption that one has all the answers within oneself and a desire to continue to develop and learn. Coaches who use this approach often, in addition to creating the conditions for development that we have mentioned, also train their clients how to approach and create these conditions for themselves and others. This can be achieved with a variety of methods:

- Stop and pay attention
- Ask relevant questions
- Listen beyond words, listen for emotions, feelings and thoughts
- Restate

- Summarize
- Consider
- Share
- Do not judge yourself or others
- Give feedback
- Coach clients to be genuine and present in the here and now

The coach's ability to listen actively, to respect and accept the client's point of view, his worldview, values, understandings, gives the leader the rare opportunity in the business world to feel listened to and properly heard. Combined with techniques from the other approaches mentioned, the person-centred approach is extremely powerful in EC.

In addition to the above approaches described by Peltier (Peltier 2009), here we will look at two more approaches that have been applied frequently in the work of executive coaches and these are the Gestalt approach and NLP.

1.3.4.8. Gestalt¹⁵ approach

Gestalt psychology holds that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Rather than going back into the past and looking for where childhood traumas are, for example, a coach using the Gestalt approach helps the client focus in the present moment and work through what is going on in their body, thoughts and emotions right now, identifying blockages, anxieties, fears and other inhibitors to their further action towards growth. Gestalt psychology gave rise to modern perception research. Paul Goodman provides the famous definition of Gestalt, which contains the fundamental idea that the continuous interaction between the person and the environment in all spheres of life closely binds the person and the surrounding world: "Experience occurs at the boundary between the organism and its environment. . . We speak of the organism's contact with its environment, but contact is the simplest and first reality." (Perls 1994). Even cognition is not wholly concerned with perception alone, but with the ways in which the perceiver integrates them into forms, into "whole things." This is why we see a picture rather than the individual figures in it, and hear a melody rather than the individual notes. And, in fact, we know and gain experience not directly from the unknowable "raw data," but precisely from the things perceived as "whole." Executive coaches working with this approach are aware of, and

¹⁵ From the German language. Gestalt does not translate exactly and the term "Gestalt" has been adopted in English. The meaning is how something is put together, put together, complete, whole. In psychology the term is often interpreted as a pattern, a configuration.

can help their clients become aware of, how these "goals," gestalts, are created on the basis of individual needs, tastes, understandings, impulses, interests, hopes, and other manifestations of "self." (Leary-Joyce, *Fertile Void: Gestalt Coaching at Work* 2014). They can help clients become aware of what information has been erased, distorted, forgotten in the formation of the gestalt. People compensate for the gaps to make sense of the picture when and where possible and make it right and simple. This concept also applies to cognitive and emotional experiences. We are compelled to "complete the picture" of an experience and complete it in as natural, balanced and simple a way as possible. We need closure in every interaction for it to be satisfying and complete (Leary-Joyce, *What is Gestalt?* n.d.). And this is where the role of the professional coach comes in.

1.3.4.9. Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

NLP is an approach that explores the connections between the way a person's body, physiology, and brain work (neuro), the words and verbal behaviors used (linguistic), and the patterns of thought and action, the patterns of behavior (programming). NLP is a set of working models from business and psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, cognitive-behavioral approach. Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) focuses on maximizing life outcomes by realizing a person's potential (Bandler 2008). Its creators, John Grinder and Richard Bandler, model the strategies of successful and exceptional people (e.g., Virginia Satir and Milton Erickson), encode them in specific models, and enable us to apply them personally and professionally.

Here we will use NLP practice to illustrate working with a client. The models from NLP Coaching can be applied effectively in any area of life. One of the most useful NLP models for executive coaching is that of Neurological Levels (R. Dilts, *A Brief History of Logical Levels* 2014) (R. Dilts, *From Coach to Awakener* 2003). Both coaching and modeling often need to address multiple levels of learning and change to be successful. According to the Neurological Levels Model (R. Dilts, *A Brief History of Logical Levels* 2014) (Fig. 14) the lives of people in any system, and indeed the life of the system itself, can be described and understood at a number of different levels: environment, behaviour, ability, values and beliefs, identity and spiritual.

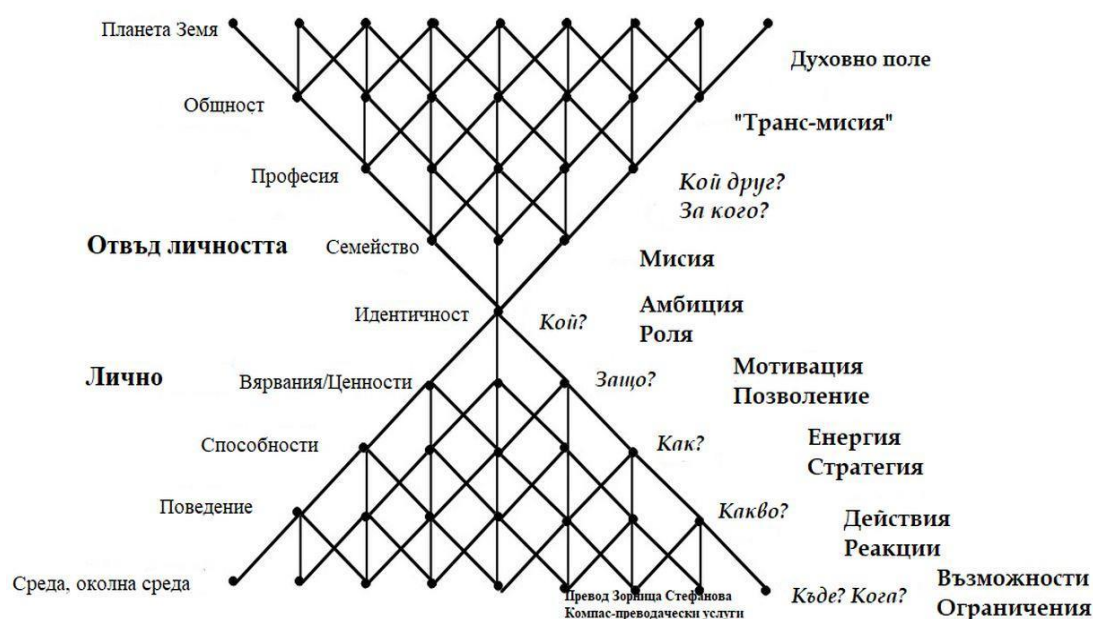


Figure 14 Dilts' Logical Levels, Robert Dilts, A Brief History of Logical Levels, 2014

The concept of logical levels refers to the fact that some processes and phenomena are created by the relationships between other processes and phenomena. Each system of activity is a subsystem embedded within another system that is embedded within another system, and so on. These kinds of relationships between systems produce different levels of processes compared to the system in which it operates. Our brain structure, language and social systems form natural hierarchies or levels of processes.

At the most basic level, coaching and modelling must address the **environment** in which a system and its members operate and interact, i.e. the environmental factors determine the context and constraints under which people work (R. Dilts, From Coach to Awakener 2003). The environment of an organisation, for example, consists of such things as the geographical location of its operations, the buildings and facilities that define the 'workplace', the design of the office and factory etc. on the people within the organisation. The client's agenda may involve working at this logical level.

At another level, behaviour can be defined in terms of general procedures. At the individual level, behaviour takes the form of specific work procedures, work habits or work-related activities. At this level, one may be working with a client who is transitioning into a new managerial or leadership position and needs to act in new ways. May need support to act appropriately in the new environment.

The next level of the process involves the **strategies, skills and capabilities** by which the organisation or individual chooses and directs actions in their environment, i.e. how they generate and guide behaviour in a particular context. For an individual, capabilities include cognitive strategies and skills such as learning, memory, decision-making and creativity that facilitate the performance of a particular behaviour or task. At the organizational level, capabilities relate to the infrastructures available to support communication, innovation, planning, and decision making among organizational members. Awareness at this level and the necessary growth associated with new strategies, new ways of thinking is key for the client.

The next levels of the process are shaped by **values and beliefs that** provide the motivation and guidance behind the strategies and options used to achieve behavioral outcomes in the environment - i.e., why people do things the way they do at a particular time and place. Our values and beliefs support what (motivation and permission) supports or inhibits certain abilities and behaviors. Values and beliefs determine how events make sense and underlie judgment and culture.

Values and beliefs support the idea of an individual's or organisation's **identity** - i.e. who is behind the why, how, what, where and when. Identity-level processes involve people's sense of role and mission in relation to their vision and the larger systems of which they are members. Typically, mission is defined in terms of service performed by people in a particular role in relation to other people in the larger system. A particular identity or role is expressed through several core values and beliefs that define the priorities to be followed by people within the role. This is where transformational changes can happen for the client. At this level his perception of himself and all that he is can change completely. This may be the necessary step to achieve Jung's individuation, Maslow's self-realization.

There is another level that can best be described as the **spiritual** level. This level has to do with people's perceptions of the larger systems to which they belong and in which they participate. These perceptions relate to a person's sense of whom or what their actions are directed toward, providing a sense of meaning and purpose to actions, abilities, beliefs, and role identity.

Executive coaching goes beyond coaching, training and mentoring to include the level of vision, mission and spirit. The coach in this process supports the executive, entrepreneur or other leader, providing contexts and experiences that reveal the best of that person's understanding of love, self and spirit. The coach can only interact with others in this way through his or her own

naturalness and harmonious wholeness in alignment with and being in full contact with his or her own vision and mission. Therefore, we are specifically looking at the qualities, skills and personality that a coach needs to demonstrate in their work and life. In this way only he can be a support for his clients without imposing his own opinions, limitations, fears, beliefs. In this way he can facilitate the process of expansion, discovery, awareness, learning and development for his clients.

All these approaches are summarised in Figure 15 below.

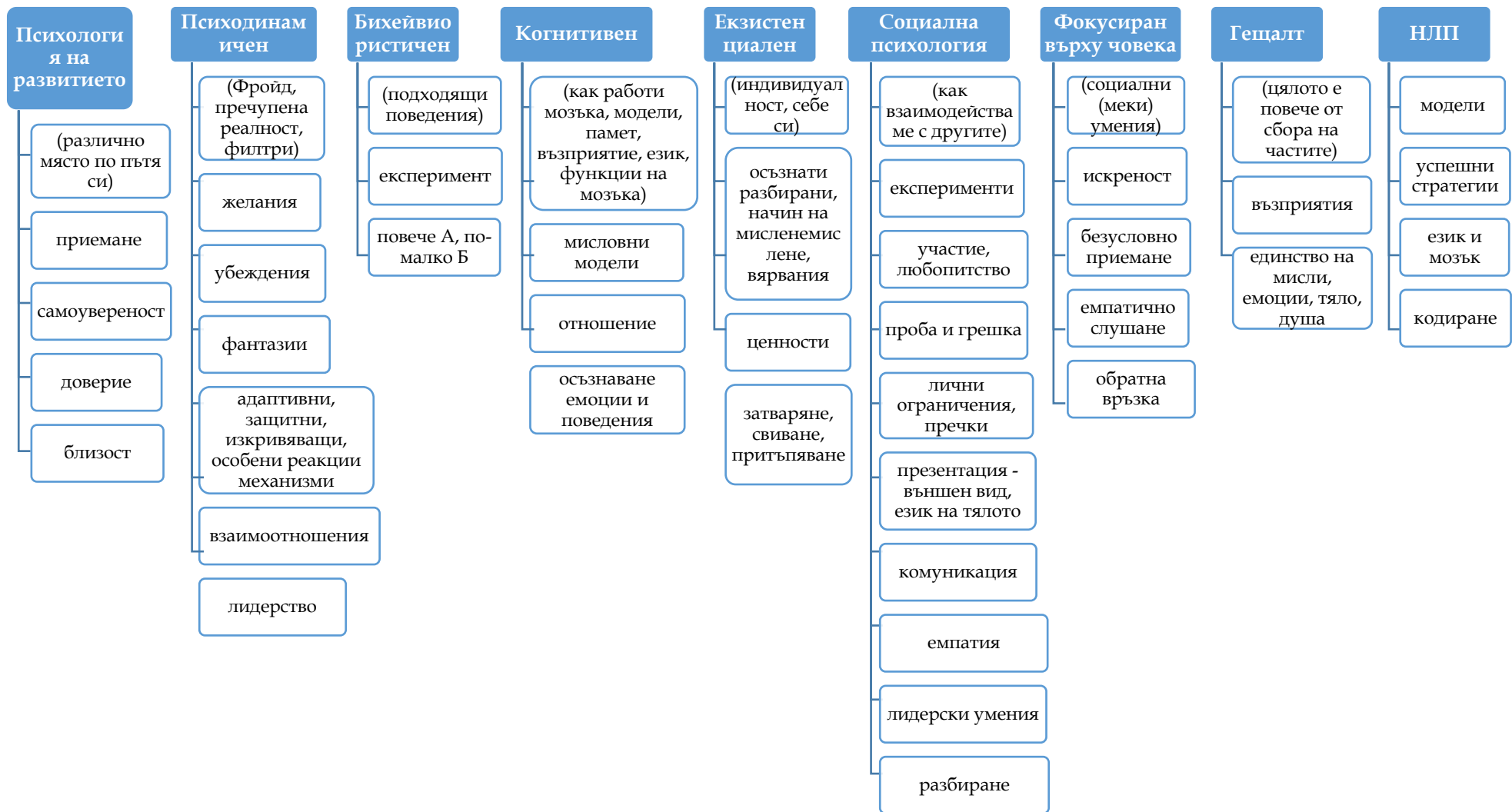


Figure 15 Approaches to executive coaching, own interpretation

1.3.5. Adverse side effects of executive coaching

Studies related to the positive effects of coaching are more commonly observed in the literature. In practice, there are cases where the coaching process does not end with the desired results. This topic is even defined as "taboo" for researchers (Kilburg, Failure and negative outcomes: The taboo topic in executive coaching 2002). Rather, to the extent that the topic is addressed at all, the negative effects have only been described theoretically (Berglas 2002) (Hodgetts 2002) (Kilburg, Facilitating intervention adherence in executive coaching: A model and methods. 2001). It has been suggested, based on research into the side effects of other dyadic relationships (e.g. in psychotherapy), that the quality of the client-coach relationship is a determinant of the outcomes of a coaching intervention (Berglas 2002). Kilburg proposes that negative effects are not only associated with leaders' performance but also with problems in their families, problems related to physical and mental health, well-being, loss of ambition and motivation (Kilburg, Failure and negative outcomes: The taboo topic in executive coaching 2002). It is only in the last few years that specific research has been done on the adverse side effects of executive coaching (Grassmann 2016) (Baron 2009). Shermulli, Shermulli-Haupt, Schoelmerich and Rauterberg propose a framework for considering adverse side effects and define them as: "any dangerous or undesirable outcomes for the client that are directly caused by the coaching and occur during or after the coaching process" (Grassmann 2016). Grassmann's research contributes to the literature on the topic by:

- **Gives clients clarity about the possible undesirable outcomes of coaching.** By drawing their attention, for example, to the importance of the quality of the relationship between them and their coaches, or the determining importance of how they perceive the coaches' professionalism and expertise, it gives them a real opportunity to choose a coach that is right for them. In this way, the relationship between client and coach, which turns out to be important to the outcome of the coaching interaction, is better from the start. When they have clarity about the direction the coaching process is moving, the roles, responsibilities, possible unintended effects, and timing can lead to greater client acceptance of the process, which improves outcomes (Wasylyshyn 2003).
- **Provides clarity on the characteristics that predict the occurrence of adverse side effects.** The study identifies three significant characteristics: the quality of the client-coach relationship, the client's motivation to change, and the extent to which the client perceives the coach as an expert in his or her work. Low values for each of the three characteristics for the clients studied were associated with more undesirable side effects.

Future research may show how to create quality client-coach relationships. There is already confirmation that similar verbal and non-verbal bonding and dominance behaviors contribute to better relationship quality (Ianiro 2013).

Coaching is a dyadic relationship in which both participants are on equal footing. Like any dyadic relationship, coaching is characterized by a relationship between the two people. Research in social psychology shows that dyadic relationships are complex and multilayered. As such, they provide both positive and negative experiences. Social exchange theory provides a framework through which to understand why negative effects can occur in such close relationships as coaching (C. a. Schermuly 2018). In EC, there is a characteristic interaction that depends on both the time spent together between coach and client and the emotional bond between the two. It appears that the quality of this relationship most often predicts coaching outcomes. In the last twenty years, much research has addressed the technical and relational aspects of dyadic relationships in the helping professions (Ackerman 2003). Although the relationship between leader and executive coach is about the self-realization of the leader in a work aspect and is rarely about therapeutic work (especially if the coach is not qualified for such), much of the research on other dyadic relationships is applicable (Baron 2009). It is also no coincidence that one of the core competencies of the coach described by the International Coaching Federation is creating a partnership between client and coach, establishing trust and closeness (ICF 2019). Carl Rogers describes the necessary prerequisites for effective work as sincerity, unconditional positive regard, acceptance and understanding based on empathy and the creation of a space in which the client is able to trust and reveal (Rogers, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* 1957). Research identifies the qualities of the coach as important to the creation and development of a quality relationship as reliability, flexibility, honesty, trustworthiness, openness, self-confidence, experience, interest, accurate interpretation, warmth, understanding and acceptance (Ackerman 2003). In addition, the same research also summarizes certain techniques that the coach applies that contribute to the relationship such as support, reflection, depth, exploration, understanding and noticing progress. In their study of the relationship between a leader and an executive coach in the field, Baron and Morris show that there is a positive correlation between the client-coach relationship and the efficacy of the two (supporting previous research on the topic) (Baron 2009). It appears that the coach's skills in facilitating the client development process such as the ability to create a development plan, track progress, use a structured approach, help with relationship awareness,

and identify obstacles and challenges are most highly correlated with the positive effects of the EC process.

Having addressed one of the most important predictors of a successful outcome from a coaching interaction, we can look in more detail at the undesirable outcomes of the process. Since EC typically involves three parties: client, coach, and organization, we will examine the possible undesirable negative effects for each party.

For customers

As already mentioned EC is not a regulated profession. The training of coaches, their experience and the methods they use are different. Coaching is still establishing itself as a profession. A large number of studies show the benefits of this method. However, research reveals undesirable results from the process (Baron 2009) (C. a. Schermuly 2018). Baron affirms that clients may not only not benefit, but also suffer in the event that the coach has not received adequate psychological training (Berglas 2002). This applies to cases where the leader using coaching has more serious internal issues and the coach is unable to discern them. Often an indication of such deeper issues is the client's painful refusal to deal with a situation or inability to change in a direction that is appropriate for them. It is important that the coach be trained to distinguish between a "problem supervisor" who can be facilitated in finding ways to deal with certain problems and a "problem supervisor" who needs to consult a psychologist/psychiatrist in certain cases. This is a problem that arises relatively often in the practice of coaches who market themselves as "solving every problem immediately" and fool clients with the idea of an instant and easy solution to every problem. Baron also stresses that EC is still seen as an acceptable form of psychotherapy. It is still difficult for an executive to admit that he or she is working with a psychotherapist/psychologist/psychiatrist and it is quite acceptable, even prestigious, to say that he or she is consulting with a coach (Berglas 2002). Some of these issues can be resolved if coaches work under supervision and have someone to discuss their own issues with when working with a particular client, and to seek feedback. This practice, to the best of the author's knowledge, is not very common in this country. It is also possible to hire independent coaches to revise the results of the coaching interaction. As a result, EC studies show job loss, financial problems, problems with family members, mental or physical problems, decreased motivation (Kilburg, Failure and negative outcomes: The taboo topic in executive coaching 2002). In the same study, the author notes that these effects need to be carefully

demonstrated. An undesirable outcome is the failure to achieve the goals set by the client at the beginning of the coaching process. We can also look at an undesirable outcome as a result achieved (e.g. in coaching a leader who has been promoted to a position where they are responsible for international markets) and as a consequence the leader realises that they are not prepared for this promotion, that they have no knowledge of the working culture, religion, attitudes in the countries they are responsible for and the teams there. This can result in lower self-esteem, anxiety or leaving. The coaching process can also be impacted and have negative consequences for the client if the direct supervisor is not aware of and in sync with the process, is not supportive and does not give the leader the time and space to integrate the processes that are taking place internally. Sometimes the interests of the organization and those of the leader are not aligned and this also creates tension. An unwanted effect can be the client's dependence on the coach that the relationship can create.

About the coaches

Studies show that 99% of coaches report that they have experienced negative effects of coaching on themselves (C. Schermuly 2014). In the same study, it is shown that although these effects are not profound and long-lasting, coaches report two to three times more often the occurrence of similar effects compared to their clients. The most commonly reported adverse effects were related **to:**

- **psychological health** (personally affected by the topic of coaching, fear of not fulfilling their role as a coach well, insecurity and emotional exhaustion)
- **social integration** (little time for self and family, closed in private)
- **unpleasant feelings towards customers** (anger, boredom, guilt)
- **Frustration** (not monitoring the long-term effects on the client, frustration about unresolved client issues, from ineffectiveness of coaching)
- **difficulty to communicate effectively**

Many coaches are committed to this profession because, along with many other reasons, they love helping and supporting others. Therefore, it is likely that very often the negative effects they report are related to their lack of confidence that they have done their job well and that they have helped to solve their clients' problems. Perhaps better psychological training during their specialist training would improve the way they feel and perceive themselves as professionals (C. Schermuly 2014).

For organisations

Fewer than 20% of respondents report negative effects for organizations, according to survey of opinions of HR executives and managers (C. Schermuly 2014). What happens is that after an interaction with coaching, the leader realizes that the work he or she is doing or the position he or she is in does not match what he or she needs (C. a. Schermuly 2018). The leader may leave without even preparing a replacement and hinder organizational performance. He/she may be less engaged, less motivated and get along less with his/her direct supervisor after coaching. It is possible that in the process of becoming aware of one's challenges, deficits, limiting behaviors and beliefs and replacing them with new and positive ones, there may be instability in the client's performance, making it difficult for the organization to (C. Schermuly 2014). The client may be satisfied with the coaching (and leave as a result) and the organization for which the client was a key figure may be dissatisfied with the outcome. Here again it is a matter of difficulty to determine exactly what the interests of the organisation (and the client) are and even more so to act in situations of rapidly changing business environments in which the interests of the organisation change. Moreover, effects assessed as negative at a given moment may turn out to be positive at a later stage of the organisation's development. While adverse effects for clients and coaches are much better studied, there is still a lack of questionnaires to study the effects on organizations (C. a. Schermuly 2018).

The following is a summary of the negative effects mentioned for clients, organisations and coaches (See Figure 16).

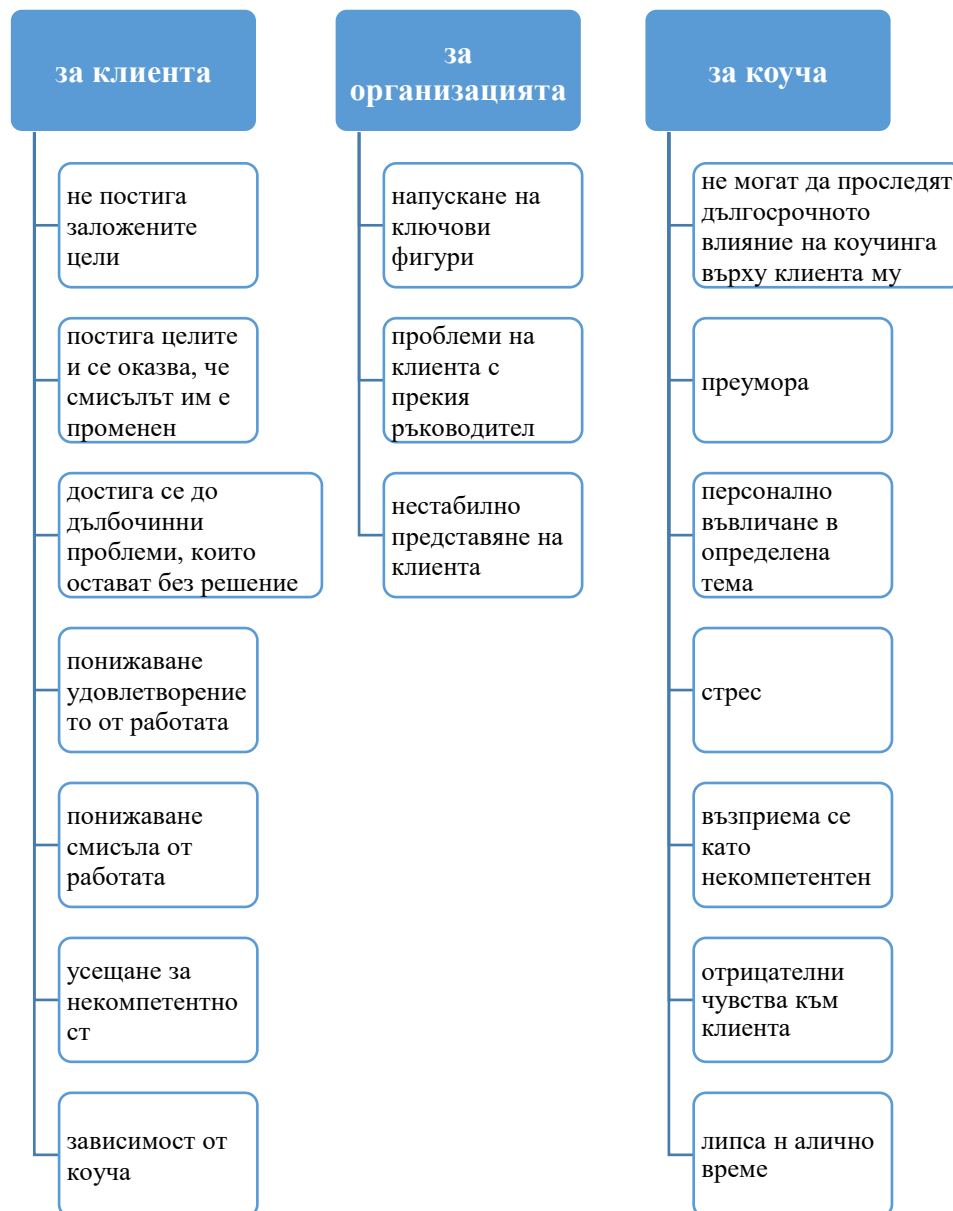


Figure 16 Some adverse side effects from EC, own interpretation

Despite the reported adverse effects of EC, there is a large body of research showing the benefits of this method of personal and professional development for managers. We will focus on these benefits in the following sections of this dissertation.

1.4. Expected benefits

Executive coaching is a costly and time-consuming process. The size of the business coaching market in the US alone is estimated at \$11.2 billion (IBISWorld 2021) growing at an average rate of 1.7% per year since 2017, with practitioners estimated at around 71,000 coaches and managers using coaching skills at around 16,000 (International Coaching Federation 2020).

Companies such as Google (Google 2017), Amazon (Amazon 2020), Facebook, Deloitte (Deloitte 2020) are investing hundreds of millions of dollars in leadership coaching support. They are creating new trends in the development and well-being practices of their employees and their key managers and leaders.

As the literature review showed, executive coaching has a wide range of benefits. In order to clarify the research, and to enable the measurement and practical use of the results, we examine and analyse the outcomes of coaching by exploring some aspects of the benefits, organised into five groups:

1. Personal development
2. Professional and career development
3. Effective management
4. Teamwork
5. Organizational performance

In a 2009 study by the International Coaching Federation, 41% to increase self-confidence and self-esteem, 36% for work/life balance, 28% for career opportunities, 25% for business management, 25% to improve relationships, 24% to improve workplace performance and 18% each to improve interpersonal relationships, communication and well-being.¹⁶ (ICF 2009) (Fig. 17)

¹⁶ The sum of the percentages is greater than 100 because respondents gave three answers, ranked in order of importance

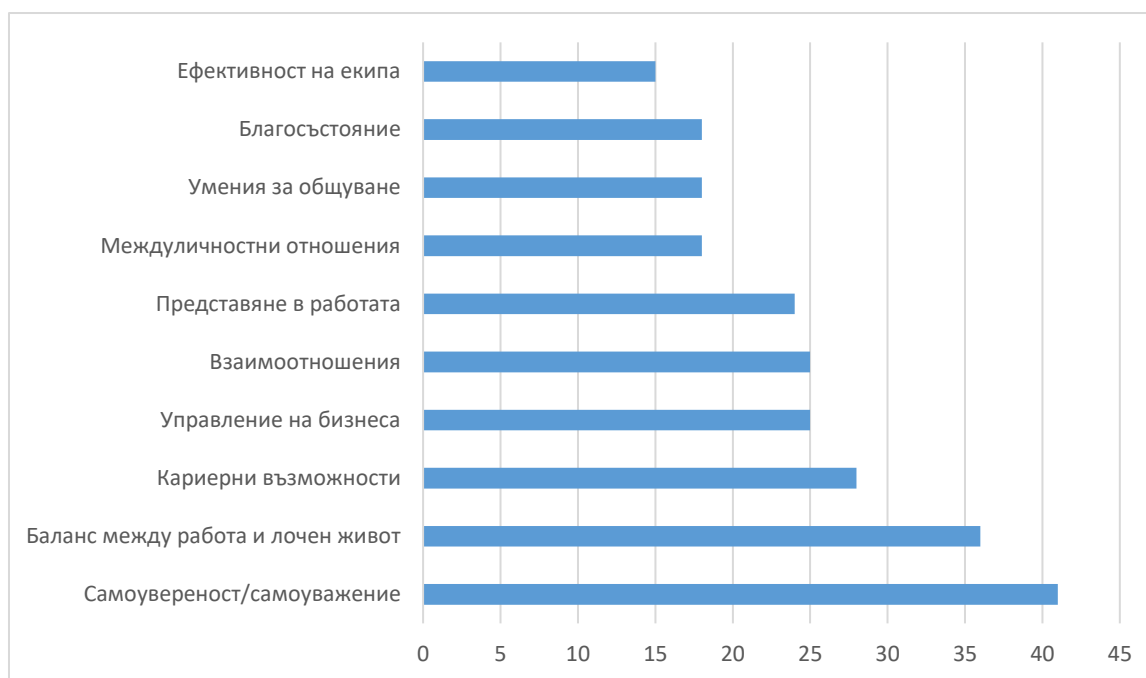


Figure 17 Factors of demand for coaching services (ICF 2009)

Potential benefits that we hypothesise and will explore are in the direction of (Federation n.d.) Personal development, professional development and organisational performance.

1.4.1. Personal development

The author's thirteen years of practical work with individual clients in both personal and professional contexts, as well as the extraordinary breakthroughs in the sciences related to the workings of the human brain and mind and one's fulfillment in life, have provoked the author to ask and examine, study and explore with extreme interest and enthusiasm the question: what stops us from being the best we are capable of being and how can we get closer to the "best version of ourselves"?

From the practical work with people and the documented responses of dozens of research subjects, the author can summarize the following:

- people often lack clarity and don't know what we want
- we often don't achieve what we want because we are not committed enough and not confident enough
- very often we have the idea of a "wasted", "meaningless", "grey" life instead of meaning, joy and happiness, personal and professional fulfillment
- we are living far from our potential both professionally and personally

- we often fail to create real, deep sincere relationships with ourselves and with others

The main question from the very beginning is what is the meaning and scope of the term "**human potential**" as the author understands it and in which sense the present work is based. The dictionary gives the following definition of potential: "*A set of means, sources, etc., necessary for the realization of some goal, which are ready to come into action*". (Bulgarian Online Dictionary 2020). This definition provides direction. We perceive potential as a set of necessary things with which we have the possibility to realize some goal. The definition mentions means and sources and "others". Some 'others' are beliefs, patterns, ways of thinking and acting, emotions, values, expectations, assumptions (Cox 2010). The research is about how and to what extent coaching helps leaders to become aware of, appreciate, change or replace some of these 'other' influences in order to live more valuably and be happier in their work and lives. One of the limitations of research is that we cannot identify all the "others" and objectively determine which "others" are most important. Therefore, we assume those that we consider valid in order to obtain the desired outcome, namely: the **paradigm** (one's pattern of perceiving the world, one's way of thinking and acting, one's belief system), one's **values, one's beliefs, and one's actions**. Another limitation of the study is that the author, with the inherent limitations and beliefs of a person, subjectively determines the scope of the study and the subjects studied.

The synonym dictionary gives the following synonyms for potential: *strength, power, capacity, opportunity, means* (OnlineRechnik.com 2022). The study is based on the holistic approach in considering human strength, power, capability, capacity and means. That is, the human being is seen as a whole - body, thoughts, emotions, soul and also as an indivisible whole with the world in the sense of being, of being. There is another limitation here. The level of awareness, understanding and receptivity, including that of the researcher, determines to some extent the results of the research. If we look even deeper and, searching for the meaning of "potential," go to the origin from Latin, *potentia* - strength, might, influence, authority, power, authority, efficacy and potential - possible, existing as a possibility but not incarnated in reality - it seems "potential" is anything that is the fruit of our strength, might, influence, authority, power, authority, efficacy that is possible but not necessarily manifested in reality.

Drawing on **the theories of the humanists** Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, we consider here human potential as those capacities of the human species that are inherent in each individual human being, that are part of his inner "constitution," that unchangeable part of him

that is not connected to thoughts, feelings, emotions, the physical body (which change). Potential is related to that part which we take to be permanent, unchanging, constant (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970) (Rogers, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* 1957). Another limitation of the study we see is that humanists view self-actualizing people as extremely mentally healthy, with a positive attitude and positive meaning in life. We assume that this is so, despite our view that human beings even at the highest degree of evolution, the most mentally healthy, are capable of mistakes, of rudeness, aggression, and disregard. And these characteristics are intrinsic to "self-actualizing" humans according to Maslow (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970). In spite of all the limitations and the high degree of subjectivity, the study is a step forward in answering the question of how leaders can develop as individuals in order to be able to manifest their human potential more fully as this is related to changes in their management style, their career development and the way they interact in a team as well as the performance of organizations.

According to humanistic thought in psychology, every human being is born to be autonomous, self-appreciating, self-fulfilled, and self-actualized (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970). In George Kelly's theory of "personal construction" and Carl Rogers' theory of the "self-centered person," it is said that the individual is a product of his own perception of the world (G. Kelly 1992) (Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory* 1951). If we are born to be happy, self-fulfilled and self-actualized human beings, and we can be because it depends (not only, but largely) on us, why are the majority of people, leaders in particular, not? Why do leaders face so many problems with communication, trust, honesty, lack of accountability, clear vision and alignment, poor execution, etc.? Furthermore, if the leader has gone astray, is there a mechanism to support him or her to get back on his or her own path so that the leader can become "whole" again?

The basis of Abraham Maslow's theory of **higher human needs** (Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* 1971) (Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* 1968) is each person's desire to realize his or her full potential. The direction that the realization of these needs will take depends on the person herself, to be a wonderful mother or a prominent leader, or an artist, or an inventor. At first glance, it would seem that the ideas on which this work is based are outdated because they date back to the 1960s. In fact, Maslow's theory is defined as a new direction in psychology (K. a. Schneider 2015), so-called humanism. It is based on experiences, values, human needs and the perception of the human being as a whole. The basis of humanism

and even Maslow's transhumanism is to examine man on the basis of his higher values, aspirations, especially love, dignity, to be respected and to respect oneself.

If one has satisfied one's basic (basic) physiological needs, needs for security, belonging and love, recognition, one's cognitive and aesthetic needs are satisfied, one achieves self-realization of one's full human potential (Fig. 18).



Figure 18 Maslow's Needs, Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 1968

They will then be motivated on the basis of intrinsic, intrinsic values, which Maslow calls higher (essential) values, B-values (Being Values), the values of being human. And these are values such as truth, goodness, uniqueness, wholeness, completeness, beauty, simplicity, elegance, justice, lawfulness, lightness, joy (Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* 1968). Maslow coined a new term in psychology, transhumanism, where motivation goes beyond the ego, beyond the self, and is based on the intrinsic values of the individual.

In the present study, the main focus is on the self-actualization¹⁷ of leaders. There remains space to explore the influence of EC on leaders' lives through higher values. It is worth noting Maslow's interesting scientific approach, namely decades of research based on psychologically healthy people, talented, strong, full of energy. His critics say this is not a representative sample

¹⁷ In English Self-Actualization

of the population. According to Maslow, the attention of psychologists, psychiatrists, and other scientists and practitioners has turned almost entirely on the sick people, the mentally unhealthy people. Therefore, in much of his research **Maslow studied mentally healthy people** and this is now a sample of the population (Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* 1971). He studies not the ordinary, average members of the human species, but a very special sample. He studies the best, the one percent of the population, the most talented, the most intelligent, the strongest, the most creative. And it's a statistical approach in its own way, although it's quite strange. He studies, as he calls it, the growing tip, the growing tip, the growing tips by analogy to that part of plants, the ends, where the growth practically takes place. Even the color of the tip is different, lighter than the rest of the branches. Instead of studying the whole population, Maslow studied only that part, the growing tips, where the growth takes place.

Maslow makes the analogy of Olympic gold medal winners representing the ultimate potential, that which is attainable for all newborn babies. What was considered impossible among humans becomes attainable. Because someone has already done it and demonstrated it. And once one person has been able to do it, the horizons, the ceiling for every newborn baby is raised and expanded. Thus it is the realized potential for the entire human race. It is a technique for selecting the most fully developed, the most evolved, even he defines it as "the truest men" (Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* 1971). In the statistical sense, it is a representative sample of those representatives who show us how the whole human race can be if people are allowed to evolve under the most favorable conditions, if they are not stood in the way and obstructed. This is definitely not an average sample of the entire population, but a sample of the top one percent, the rising top. The author of this paper, notwithstanding Maslow's research, also relies on the study and development of "rising peaks" in his practice. Modern corporations and other organizations are not focused on growing their most valuable people, their leaders, as evidenced by the leadership problems in organizations mentioned above.

Speaking of a return to spirituality, Maslow observed that his subjects reported a common state, the so-called **peak experiences** (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970). These are the subjective experiences called mystical and described by William James. They are something typical of Maslow's subjects. Characteristic of peak experiences are a sense of immensity opening before the gaze, the feeling of being stronger and more helpless at the same time, the experience of ecstasy, wonder and awe, the loss of a sense of time and place. Most important is the conviction that something extremely important and precious has happened to you, thanks to

which, after such experiences, one is to some extent transformed and more self-confident even in one's daily life¹⁸. Here we can distinguish between the supreme experiences Maslow observed in his subjects and Nirvana or mystical experiences described in other ways in the theological literature. Maslow distinguished the supreme experiences in his subjects from the supernatural origin of mystical experiences. The supreme experiences he studied in his subjects can be described, can be placed on a quantitative continuum from intense to mild. Maslow describes how the mild mystical experience occurs sporadically to many (Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* 1971). Whereas in the subjects studied these experiences occur regularly, even daily. In strong peak experiences, strong problem centering, great concentration, intense sensual experience, the derivation of intense-to-forgetful pleasure from, for example, music or art are reported (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970). Although they sometimes seem like the mystical experiences described in the theological literature, peak experiences can be well studied and classified, and thus become the object of study.

Self-realization means to make real the manifestation of the inner self of man, which we may call the inner constitution, the intransitive part, that which man loves, is interested in, which suits him, which excites him, which fascinates him, and which is the cause which is outside man. Paradoxically, it is this intransitive part that becomes that which defines the essence of man, for he would not be truly himself if he did not cling to this essence. The point of this part is that man is not interested in anything out there, outside of himself. Man forgets about his ego, about flaunting, about the need to be applauded and admired. Because that fascinating thing inside him becomes valuable in itself. And this is where autonomy comes in - being accountable to oneself, resisting temptations and distractions, resisting suggestions that are out of sync with the inner self, choosing one's truth. To follow one's own inner compass.

Whereas in his earlier research Maslow talked about only about two percent of people being able to self-actualize, in later developments of his theory he talked about how we can define **self-actualization as an episode or burst in which one's strength and power come together in a particularly effective and joyful, intensely joyful way**. In these moments, one is more integrated and whole and less divided, more open to experience, more beautifully expressive and spontaneous, functioning more fully, more creative, more filled with humor, more transcending one's ego, more independent of one's baser needs. In these moments one becomes more truly oneself, more fully realizes one's potentials, closer to the essence of one's being,

¹⁸ Similar experiences were reported by some subjects of the present study.

more fully human. Such states or moments can, purely theoretically, occur at any time in any person's life. What seems to distinguish those individuals who qualify as actualizing is that for them such moments seem to come much more frequently and more intensely than for the average person. In this sense, self-actualization is more a matter of the degree and frequency of such experiences than that it is only possible for certain individuals. Thus we need no longer limit ourselves to looking for those rare subjects who can say that they are self-realized. At least theoretically we can, according to Maslow, examine any person's history for experiences of self-realization, of particularly great insights during psychotherapy, or other important experiences for personal development. Self-realization is a process, an action, an ongoing change.

This can't help but be related to Michael Merzenik's **theory of neuroplasticity**¹⁹ (M. V. Merzenich 2014) (M. Merzenich 2018). Neuroplasticity, also known as brain plasticity, neuroplasticity, or neural plasticity, is the brain's ability to change continuously throughout an individual's lifetime. For example, brain activity associated with a particular function may be transferred to a different location, the proportion of grey matter may change, and synapses may strengthen or weaken over time. Research in the second half of the 20th century has shown that many aspects of the brain can be altered (or are "plastic") even in adulthood. Neuroplasticity can occur on multiple scales, from microscopic changes in individual neurons to larger-scale changes, such as cortical reassignment in response to injury. Behavior, environmental stimuli, thought, and emotion can also cause neuroplastic change through activity-dependent plasticity, which has significant implications for healthy development, learning, memory, and recovery from brain injury. At the single cell level, synaptic plasticity refers to changes in the connections between neurons, whereas nonsynaptic plasticity refers to changes in their intrinsic excitability. There is now ample evidence for the active, experience-dependent reorganization of the brain's synaptic networks involving multiple interconnected structures, including the cerebral cortex. The way in which experience can affect the synaptic organization of the brain is also the basis of a number of theories of brain function, including general theory of mind and neural Darwinism (Edelman 1987). The concept of neuroplasticity is also central to theories of memory and learning that are concerned with experience-driven change in synaptic structure and function. The mature as well as the immature brain is constantly reorganizing, here and now. In this way, all kinds of learning are supported. Interventions can facilitate positive

¹⁹ In English Neuroplasticity

plasticity across the lifespan (Boyd 2015). It is a matter of acquiring the appropriate awareness and maturity and mastering practices and methods to help a person not only in their personal but also in their professional development. These practices and methods can sometimes be learnt through reading relevant literature, training, talking to mentors. In general, effective and quick can be obtained when working with a professional coach or psychologist, depending on one's particular preferences and attitudes. It is important to note that if there is no awareness and motivation on the part of the person to use outside help, the above practices and methods would not work (C. a. Schermuly 2018).

One of the best methods of learning **is through experience**²⁰ (Rogers, Freedom to Learn 1959). According to Carl Rogers, the effective learning and development of great leaders occurs in the context of their own strategic, economic, intellectual, and emotional needs (Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957).

Rogers lists **five defining elements of meaningful experiential learning**:

1. personal engagement - "the whole person with both their feelings and cognitive aspects is engaged in the learning event"
2. self-initiated - "Even when the impetus or stimulus comes from the outside, the sense of discovery, of going beyond the limit, of understanding comes from within"
3. wide-ranging - "changes the learner's behaviour, attitudes, perhaps even personality"
4. it is assessed by the learner - the learner knows "whether the learning is meeting his needs, leading to what he wants to know, illuminating the dark area of ignorance he is experiencing"
5. the essence of such learning is meaning for the learner - "when such learning takes place, the element of meaning for the learner is embedded in the whole experience"

In order for constructive personality change to occur, it is necessary and sufficient for the following conditions to exist for a period of time (Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957) (Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory 1951):

1. Two people are in psychological contact.
2. The first, whom we will call the client, is in a state of desynchronization - vulnerable or anxious.

²⁰ Experiential Learning

3. The second person, whom we will call the therapist, is congruent or integrated into the relationship.
4. The therapist has unconditional positive regard and respect for the client.
5. The therapist has an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference and seeks to communicate this experience to the client.

These elements, according to the author, should be an integral part of the executive coaching process.

Synergistically related to experiential learning theory is Jack Maziro's **transformational learning** theory ²¹ (Mezirow, Perspective Transformation 1977) (Mezirow, Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning 1991). Transformational learning is the process of **deep, constructive, meaningful learning that is beyond mere knowledge acquisition**. This type of learning supports people to think critically and **live meaningfully** (Mezirow, Perspective Transformation 1977). Transformational learning is a **change of so-called meaning perspective**. It is a set of thoughts, feelings, and volition that represent how a person thinks about themselves, others, and their relationships. We have a meaning perspective instilled by society, but we have the potential to become aware of what works for us (thoughts, feelings, will) and what doesn't and to change things so that they work for us. Such rethinking is often the result of the current meaning perspective not allowing us to cope with so-called anomalies (major life changes or major upheavals, death of a loved one, job loss or job change, birth of a child, etc.). In such cases, **adding knowledge, skills and higher competences in the present meaningful perspective does not bring the needed result and is even painful**. One can then critically reconsider one's perceptions and interpretation of reality and take the necessary action (action is an important element in this theory). Even after the change of perspective and the decision to take action, these plans may require special support and assistance. Transformational learning, as the name suggests,. For such transformative change, people often turn to a psychologist, coach, or other professional.

According to the author, attention is also important for the learning process. According to the theory of attentional **learning**²² (Langer 2000) of Langer, attention is a flexible state of mind in which **we are actively engaged in the present, noticing new things and being sensitive to context**. In this way, we can make the most of our brain's neuroplasticity. When we are in a

²¹ Transformative learning

²² In English Mindful learning

state of inattention, we behave and act automatically according to the perception our behavior has created in the past, not in the present. Instead of actively noticing new things, as we do when we are mindful, when we are inattentive we rely on distinctions drawn in the past. We are stuck in a single, unshakeable perspective and forget about any alternative ways of knowing. When we are unaware at a particular moment, our behavior becomes rules and routine. When we are mindful, rules and routines can guide our behavior rather than predetermine it. **When we are mindful we consider a situation from multiple perspectives**, see the information presented in the situation as new, consider the context in which we perceive the information, and ultimately **create new conceptual categories through which that information can be understood**.

The process of leadership learning and development is also directly linked to **adult learning theory (andragogy)**²³ (M. Knowles, *Adult learning processes: Pedagogy and Andragogy* 1977). Adult learning (andragogy) differs categorically from child learning (pedagogy). Although the idea of learning that is conscious, meaningful, tailored to the needs of the individual and occurs throughout life is more than 50 years old (Rogers, *Freedom to Learn* 1959) (Cropley 1977), and **nowadays many leadership development programs are at odds with adult learning principles**. Programmes are usually based on a simple transfer of knowledge, skills and behaviours from the lecturer/teacher/'knower' without regard to the individual needs of the learner.

As Knowles says, the mission of adult educators is to meet three different kinds of needs: the **needs and goals of the individual, the needs and goals of the organization, and the needs and goals of society** (M. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*.). Personal needs include, but are not limited to, the need for lifelong development, self-realization (from Maslow's pyramid of needs), maturation. Organizational needs can include the development of individuals according to their place in and according to what they are needed for in organizations, for organizations to fulfill their goals, to be effective, to build a certain image in society because they hire and pay the trainers.

Society carries out adult education to create citizens who fit the desired image of citizens, namely those who will build and sustain a certain kind of society.

Baseline **characteristics for adult learners** are:

²³ In English Andragogy

- **Self-understanding:** by maturing, one moves from a dependent personality to a human being who is self-governed
- **Personal experience:** past experience, including mistakes, is a reservoir for learning, especially since adults perceive more through experience than passively.
- **Readiness to learn:** adults are ready to learn something when they feel the need to learn it in order to cope more satisfactorily with real-world tasks and problems. The trainer has the task of supporting them to understand what their needs are. Here Knowles makes reference to Maslow's needs. The idea is that the learner's needs are uncovered and met in the learning process, regardless of which level they are meeting challenges at.
- **Direction of learning:** adults see learning as a process to develop themselves so that they can apply whatever skills and knowledge they have to live more successfully, to reach their full human potential. **And when they make the discovery that they can be in charge of their learning, as it applies to other areas of life,** they feel a sense of relief and elation.
- **The motivation to learn is intrinsic** (M. H. Knowles 2014): adults learn because they have internal goals and needs that they want to satisfy through what they learn. Therefore, the effectiveness of learning can be enhanced by raising the expectation of reward if learned and of failure if not learned. Also motivation can be increased if **goals are specified early in the** learning process.

The organisation of the learning process itself is also important. The point is not to move the learner from partial, meaningless parts to significant whole things, but rather from simpler whole things to more complex whole parts.

Knowles also talks about the importance of certain conditions for learning. For example, in order for a person to have a need to learn, the environment needs to be physically comfortable (temperature, light, decoration, etc.), there needs to be **respect, consideration, empathy, mutual aid and acceptance of the differences** of all participants in the learning process. Participants perceive the goals of the learning process as their own and participate in the planning and design of the process. They participate actively in the experience and move towards the realization of their goals. On the other hand, the demands on the trainers are:

- create this atmosphere and take care of the participants
- perceive learners with their feelings, thoughts and emotions
- respect their ideas

- are also learners and as such freely express their feelings and contribute resources to the process (M. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education.*).

These ideas are the basis for a large number of studies and enrich, complement and develop the theory (Bell 2017).

A holistic approach underpins the work on this dissertation on the benefits of executive coaching for leaders' personal and professional self-realization. The starting point is that in order to function at close to full capacity, a leader needs to act in sync with their body, mind, heart and soul. Coaching can be used as a method to support leaders in this process. Self-realization, the unified whole to which he aspires, is his guiding north star. Self-awareness, inner unity and oneness with other people and the world, joy, fulfillment, meaning are some of the milestones in the direction that the inner compass points. We have already set out at length the ideas behind personal development. This theoretical base opens us to explore the impact of EC on the personal development of leaders.

Here we will pay more specific attention to some aspects that have not been well studied so far.

- **Joy.** Until a few years ago, the focus of researchers was usually on how to use coaching to minimize stress, burnout, chronic fatigue, lack of meaning and satisfaction. Managers' action plans routinely include increasing engagement, increasing sales, reducing marriage, reducing lateness and sick leave. There has been relatively little research, and in the last few years, on the impact of joy at work. There is no talk of joy, even though learning, developing and working with joy is the surest method for high engagement, both manager and whole teams (Bendaly 2019) (Jalilianhasanpour 2021). But there is another point of view. The focus to be placed on joy. Joy is not a passive and inward feeling like happiness. Joy is active. It requires a proactive approach to increase the sense of value, appreciation and well-being in managers and team members. This can be directly linked to well-being. Here we are talking about solutions by creating a bright and cheerful physical and psycho-social workplace. Such a place offers programmes that encourage attention, focus, humour, playfulness and fun. For the youngest generation of managers, this is a top priority. Joy proves to be a valuable and enjoyable way to increase engagement and quality (Carder 2019).
- **Just awareness.** Emotional intelligence begins with just awareness - listening to your inner voice. Listening to your inner voice is a matter of paying constant attention to the inner physiological signals. These subtle cues are monitored by the insula, which is

tucked behind the frontal lobes of the brain. Attention paid to any part of the body heightens the sensitivity of the insula to that part. If we tune in to the heart rate, the insula activates more neurons in that circuit. How well people can sense their heart rate has actually become a standard way of measuring their self-awareness. Gut feelings are messages from the insula and amygdala, which neuroscientist Antonio Damasio of the University of Southern California calls somatic markers (Goleman, *The Focused Leader* 2020). Leaders who are attuned to their inner voices can use more resources to make better decisions and connect more authentically with their core selves. The primary task of leadership is to direct attention. To do this, says Nobel Prize-winning economist Daniel Golman, leaders must learn to focus their own attention. People usually think that "being focused" means filtering out distractions while concentrating on one thing (Goleman, *The Focused Leader* 2020). But much research in neuroscience in recent years has shown that we focus attention in many ways, for different purposes, and our brains use different neural pathways to do so. Every leader needs to cultivate three kinds of focus - internal focus, focus on others, and external focus. Focusing inward and focusing on others helps leaders cultivate emotional intelligence. Focusing outward can improve their ability to strategize, innovate, and manage organizations.

- **Developing intuition.** In times of such a rapidly changing environment, organisations need leaders who can make good decisions in the face of incomplete information, tight deadlines and without the opportunity to consult others, i.e. based on intuitive decision making (Patton 2003). Research shows that there is a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and levels of emotional intelligence and intuition (Downey 2006). Workplace emotional intelligence, i.e., the way an individual thinks, feels, and acts at work based on emotional information, has been shown to predict transformational leadership better than does general emotional intelligence. This aspect of leaders' skills, while often overlooked, turns out to be very important because of the huge doses of uncertainty, confusion, and fear typical of crisis situations and because such decisions carry great ethical and financial weight (Sayegh 2004). And this is the world we have been living in constantly for the last few years.

These theoretical propositions show us an opportunity to explore the impact of coaching for leaders on their personal development, growth and self-realization.

Thus, we formulate the first research hypothesis 1 (X1): the process of executive coaching positively influences the growth of the leader's personality (personal development).

Our assumption based on the theoretical review is that personal development through coaching would impact career development, effective leadership and teamwork, and organizational performance. Long-standing research has shown that people's professional development and prestige are closely related to their personal development and satisfaction with their lives in general (Gullahorn 1966). A study of a group of experienced psychotherapists showed that their personal therapy was seen not only as part of their training process, but also as playing an important role in the process of ongoing individuation and in the development of their ability to use themselves to achieve connectedness with their clients in each moment and to be better at their work (Wiseman 2001). The influence of personal therapy on professional identity and the way therapists enter into relationships with clients suggest that themes such as identity and self-confidence, as well as relationships with clients, are crucial to therapists' sense of professional development (Wiseman 2001). Many articles have appeared on the internet in the last year that also talk about the importance of personal development in the workplace and the positives for professional development (Willis 2022) (team 2022) (Benefits of Personal Development 2022) without scientific evidence. The problem with the literature on the benefits of coaching to date is the lag between theory and practice.

1.4.2. Career Development

We have a range of evidence that careers have a clear link to wellbeing in a person's life as a whole (Rath 2010). It is therefore not surprising that career issues, decisions and dilemmas feature frequently in many conversations during coaching interactions. The non-directive approach (Joseph 2014) has long been considered the most effective approach to career exploration (Egan 2013). In today's dynamic and so rapidly changing world, changing careers several times in a person's lifetime is the rule rather than the exception. Taking responsibility for one's own professional and career development is now expected of leaders themselves and is normal. Coaches, many of whom have also changed careers and have similar experiences themselves, can provide clients with a safe and protected space, a clear framework within which leaders can work through their own experiences and become aware of them (Yates 2017). Typically, two factors acting simultaneously lead to a career change, namely dissatisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current job and an attractive alternative. For us here, the other perspective is important - career development within the organisation itself. Experience shows

that job advancement is often the result not of certain skills, merits, or talents on the part of the manager, but of seniority, personal relationships, or a comfortable fit for meeting certain goals. These are factors that are not currently the subject of this paper, but may prove an interesting avenue for research. In either case, interaction with the coaching method is an important process in conscious decision making by the leader. Change, ambiguity and complex relationships are recurring themes in contemporary career development. In turn, personal success in the evolving "knowledge economy" requires self-awareness, adaptability, and the ability to work with others. An interesting study of Chinese middle managers (Woo 2011) shows that these managers are about 10 years younger than their Western counterparts in comparable positions, i.e. they have about 10 years less experience. While foreign senior managers have on average 18-23 years of experience, their Chinese counterparts have on average 10 years of experience. The literature suggests that Western managers face a "midlife crisis" when they are between the ages of 45 and 55, while Chinese managers tend to reach this transition between the ages of 35 and 45. Considered in the context of Kegan's theory of the five levels of awareness that modern humans possess or have the potential to achieve (Kegan 1994) with the fifth level being so-called meaning making²⁴, it appears that it is not age that plays such an important role in the maturation and career development of leaders, but rather their response as personal and professional development and growth to changes in the environment and the intrinsic needs of the person. That is, the "midlife crisis" is not exactly a crisis, but a development and going through certain challenges. Woo as an executive coach has an understanding that he can provide the group of leaders he works with not just with the development of certain qualities and skills, but with the best applicable theories and practices for understanding both themselves and the context and behavioral choices they have before them (Woo 2011). For the purpose of exploring the ways in which executive coaching improves the goal attainment, resolve and well-being in the workplace of leaders (A. C. Grant 2009), the authors conducted coaching sessions using a solution-focused cognitive-behavioral framework (A. Grant, The impact of life coaching on goal attainment, metacognition and mental health 2003). This approach suggests that goal attainment can be facilitated by understanding the interconnectedness between thoughts, feelings, behaviours and the environment and structuring these in the most effective way to achieve a particular goal. In the cognitive-behavioral approach, incorporating a solution-focused perspective helps to orient coaching toward developing personal strengths and building

²⁴ In English meaning-making

solutions rather than, as in therapy, toward analyzing problems. Therefore, it is very common for excellent professional coaches to develop the entire coaching intervention process based on working with the leader's strengths, strengths and talents, rather than, as in therapy, analyzing the weaknesses and wasting valuable time and energy addressing them, which usually leads to great frustration and denial of the process. Executive coaching does support goal achievement, increases determination, reduces depressive states and stress, and increases well-being (A. Grant, The impact of life coaching on goal attainment, metacognition and mental health 2003). The authors conclude that "given how many organisational change initiatives are problematic and that failures to change can be costly in both business and human terms, organisations should 'consider using individual coaching as a support mechanism". This builds resilience at an organisational and individual level. This theoretical basis opens up the possibility for us to explore the impact of personal development and growth on the career development of leaders.

Thus, we formulate research hypothesis 2 (X2): personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences a leader's career development.

1.4.3. Effective management

The challenge at EC is to help leaders better develop their strengths and this in turn helps them better contribute to their career development and to their organisation (Drucker 1999). There is a need for leaders who use coaching to be successful in their own careers and at the same time encourage and support the contribution of the people in their teams to the organisation, i.e. their personal and their professional development go together (P. a. Parker 2004). Studies have shown that the more developed the economy, the more prevalent is the individual approach to career management rather than the organizational (J. a. Segers 2012). However, the transition from predominantly organizational to individualistic career management requires organizations to move away from the traditional command-and-control career management style and top-down development approach and become "supportive and developmental" (Baruch 2006). At the same time, remain actively engaged in managing the careers of their leaders (J. a. Segers 2012). The same research shows that the more innovative and with strategies for development and success the organization, the more often coaching is used. The more focused on cost reduction, the less often coaching and other methods of leader development are used. This theoretical base opens us to explore the impact of effective management on the career development of leaders. By keeping the focus on the achievement of certain goals related to the

organization's objectives, an effective manager can ensure the achievement of these goals by involving the people on his/her team(s) in choosing operational ways of achievement by giving them timely feedback (Rohlander 1999). It is common for organizations processes to be hampered by lack of good communication. While in some cases this is due to disengagement or lack of skills, in many cases it is due to avoiding difficult conversations and giving honest feedback. In many organisations leaders are afraid of open and authentic relationships (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018). Working with leaders during coaching to improve their awareness, confidence, acceptance and resilience could lead to better relationships.

These considerations provide us with the basis to formulate research hypothesis 3 (X3): effective management as an outcome of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences career development.

1.4.4. Teamwork

In 2020, Gallup urges, "Turn your company into a development machine for your people." (Robison 2020). The average large American business spent \$17.7 million on training in 2019. The return estimated at \$60.3 million represents about 3.5 times return on investment. A large company can save \$60 million a year if its managers move their teams into the top 25% of engagement. Only about 30% of executives report that they strongly agree they had opportunities to learn and develop in 2020, even though as many as 66% participated in a professional development program. And 36% of managers don't believe they have the skills they need to do their best work (Gallup 2019).

The work that used to be done individually is now, with the extremely dynamic technology and dynamic work environment, usually done by teams. Especially if it involves complex projects, creativity, innovation and/or technology. And with the development of technology and globalization in the last few years, collaboration and teamwork is key. Working on a project involves people with different specializations, competencies, skills, representatives of different ethnicities, cultures, beliefs. It is only through teamwork that projects can be completed successfully. As the editor-in-chief of Wired magazine says, "[The current] networked economy is based on technology, but it can only be built on relationships. It starts with chips and ends with trust." (K. Kelly 1999). Various aspects of teamwork have been studied: team communication, team problem solving, performance and effectiveness, creativity, motivation (King 2017). It is crucial for a leader to understand who individual team members are as people,

what their personal and professional goals, ambitions, and values are. In the author's experience, only when the important things - values, beliefs, vision and goals - of the team members, the leader and the organisation are aligned can a truly cohesive and effective team emerge. We are not talking about "sameness" of team members here, but acceptance, valuing, respect and appreciation. Often poor team relationships, regardless of compensation, is the cause of quits, layoffs, turnover, ineffectiveness. Of course, sometimes it is necessary for a leader to be able to let an employee go in time to keep the team going. Especially if that person is actively disengaged and affecting the morale of others (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). Sometimes, if such people are particularly important or valuable as personnel, such an extreme measure can be prevented if appropriate, effective feedback is given (Laufer 2018). However, research shows that "Most managers hate giving critical feedback, and most employees hate receiving it" (Cannon 2005). Immediate feedback in face-to-face communication allows understanding to be checked and interpretation to be adjusted and fine-tuned if necessary. Moreover, face-to-face communication encompasses the entire spectrum of human perception and interaction: words, pictures, movements, tone and timbre of voice, intonation, smells, touches, emotions. This is what we have been lacking, perhaps, during the years of the cowbird pandemic. Already accustomed to communicating on line, we are depriving ourselves of valuable experiences, sacrificing our psychological health to the physical. In face-to-face communication, we perceive the situation through eye-to-eye contact, body movements, facial expressions, even breathing. It is very important to note that over 90% of communication between people is non-verbal and influences how people perceive each other (Landau 1969) (Mehrabian 1971) (Cuddy 2015). It is important for leaders to communicate trust, confidence and courage in order to create trust and communicate authentically within the team. Trust can be defined as a choice to risk doing something that is valuable to one, and is vulnerable to the actions of others. The choice to trust consists of four distinct assessments: how sincere, trustworthy, competent, and caring the person across the table is (Feltman 2008). The other side is distrust, i.e. the belief that something important and valuable to a person is not safe with the other person in a particular situation. Then the usual coping and 'protection' strategies are resistance, non-sharing, avoidance, argument, ignoring or direct attack. The author's experience and research on the topic (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018) (Brown, Daring Greatly 2012) show that if a leader helps to create an atmosphere of mistrust, the price the team pays is a sense of insecurity and threat, fear, antagonism between people, judgment, expecting the worst to

happen, and this is usually accompanied by a sense of helplessness, anger or a desire for the person to "disappear". On the other hand, working in a team where trust and understanding reign brings happiness, openness and confidence that the team can get through anything, faith and care (Feltman 2008). This is confirmed by the results of a Fortune study cited in an article by Stephen Covey and Douglas Conant that "trust between managers and employees is the primary defining characteristic of the best workplaces" and that companies with high levels of trust "have three times the average annual return of the Fortune 500." (Covey 2016).

Very often, both in practice and in the literature, the financial dimensions of coaching are emphasized, e.g. return on capital. Clearly, such measurement is logical because business organizations are set up to maximize profits. But financial outcomes are difficult to measure on the one hand because much of the information is confidential, it is not possible to say precisely or even approximately precisely how much of a particular financial outcome can be associated with the performance of the manager/leader using coaching alone and how much with the performance of others, it is not possible to determine how much the performance of the leader using coaching depends on the use of a coaching intervention, and on the other hand, the true benefits of coaching could not be shown with sufficient precision. Such a focus on financial metrics may narrow the view and coaches on the one hand and organizations on the other may not fully realize the true impact of coaching (A. Grant, ROI is a poor measure of coaching success: towards a more holistic approach using a well-being and engagement framework 2012). It is very important to consider outcomes in the context of other factors, for example, employee engagement and well-being. And these characteristics are indirectly very important for the success of organisations, as we have already commented (Gallup 2022) (Gallup 2021). Moreover, superficial coaching interventions that are only about increasing financial performance can lead to unhealthy increases in employee stress levels and burnout. It is necessary to measure the benefits of coaching in order to allocate budgets for this type of leadership development, but it is also important to calibrate to other, non-financial measures (well-being, engagement, joy, meaning, improved relationships). It is only in the last ten years that the literature has begun to pay attention to the emotions that leaders express and how this affects the team. According to (Madera 2009) the paucity of research that addresses the mechanisms by which emotion expressed by leaders affects team outcomes is a major limitation in the leadership literature. This is because team members can pick up on leaders' emotions and even respond congruently, i.e., team members of positive, cheerful leaders are also positive,

whereas team members of negative leaders are more likely to judge and resent (Bono 2006). Research has shown that only after leaders begin to understand exactly how their emotions affect their team could they choose emotionally intelligent behaviors and thus guide not only their own mood and emotional attitudes, but those of their team members as well (Eberly 2013). The CEO of LinkedIn shares that leaders should not expect others to act according to their expectations (Weiner 2017). Rather, it is necessary to manage compassionately (compassionate management), to discover the strengths of each person on the team and coach them in those areas, emphasize their strengths and then unimaginable potential is unlocked. In this way, the leader becomes a catalyst for development and learning within their team. This theoretical setting shows us an opportunity to explore the impact of effective management on teamwork.

Thus we formulate research hypothesis 4 (X4): effective management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences teamwork.

While transformational leadership focuses on leaders' ability to transform followers through motivating, inspiring vision and leadership qualities that promote positive change among all employees, the exchange between leaders and team members/followers highlights the importance of leaders' unique relationships with followers as a driver of positive attitudes and behaviors. Burch's research cited here compares the impact of these two leadership styles on follower engagement (Burch 2014). The results show that it is not inspirational leadership behaviors but the unique relationship employees have with their leader that creates follower engagement. Furthermore, the results suggest that team member engagement mediates the relationship between leadership and key employee outcomes (e.g., employee behavior and turnover). Along these lines, research in recent years suggests the need for studies focused on leadership as a resource at work. Engaged employees are more open to new information, more productive, and more willing to go the "last mile." Moreover, engaged employees proactively change their work environment to stay engaged (Bakker 2010). Although not much research exists on the impact of coaching on teamwork. The research on (Aldrin 2019) shows a very strong and significant correlation between performance in teams before and after a coaching intervention and it can be said that there is a big difference in team performance after a coaching intervention. In addition, a coaching style that is appropriate to an individual's needs allows coaches to create a climate for mastery (Van Puyenbroeck 2017). Such a climate seems to encourage clients who have used coaching to be proactive, allowing teams to cope effectively

when faced with challenges. Coaching is used as a method of development and teamwork in different types of teams: sport (Van Puyenbroeck 2017), medical (Petty 2019) (Welp 2018), project organizations (Mariam 2020), traditional and virtual organisations (Żukowska 2010). Coaching is, as already discussed, heterogeneous in terms of types and practices depending on the skills, understandings and values of the coaches. Coaching interventions can produce very different results according to the way it is used. The contrasting effects of facilitative versus pressure-based coaching on changes in team effectiveness have been explored (Weer 2015). It appears that facilitative coaching positively affects team engagement and in turn increases team effectiveness, whereas pressure-based coaching hinders team functioning by negatively affecting team engagement due to increased levels of team tension. This theoretical basis provides us with a basis to examine the impact of leaders' personal development on team functioning.

Thus we formulate research hypothesis 7 (X7): personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences teamwork.

1.4.5. Organizational performance

Research views effective leadership as an amalgam of cognitive, emotional and social competence (Almatrooshi 2016). This links directly to the literature on the importance of internal synchronicity between body, thoughts, heart and soul and mindfulness. A leader cannot be conscious and whole and self actualized if he is not in inner synchrony. Apart from not being able to be calm and joyful, it affects the rest of the team and hence the wider level - the organisation. One of the important aspects of internal synchrony, according to the author's practical observations, is the ability of the leader to let go of control, to trust and to get on with the things that are most valuable to the organisation, to the team and to him or herself. Given that letting go of control in successful people is quite challenging, special work is needed in this regard. Very often leaders reach exhaustion and chronic stress, burnout and illness (Mate 2003). Therefore it is vital for them to delegate. Viewed from the employees' side, when they delegate, the de facto manager provides them with the opportunity to develop personally and professionally and a collaborative climate is created that encourages innovation and creativity (de Vries 2011). This is also strongly related to empowerment - giving employees a voice at different levels in the organisation by sharing information and delegating to them the work they are most competent to do. When an effective manager sets his or her focus on achieving a

particular goal or goals, he or she can provide freedom for his or her people to be flexible about the methods they use and thus can also give them more and more feedback to develop (Rohlander 1999). Furthermore, practice shows that by delegating and trusting his people, the manager gives them the opportunity for initiative. In this way, people's confidence and trust in their capabilities and in the manager himself can be increased. According to Gallup's surveys of the most successful managers, regardless of the type of organisation and industry in which they operate, they have one skill in common, and that is to recognise and use the talents and strengths of their people (Davenport 2018). Very often these managers allocate work and roles by periodically revising and reshaping them according to the qualities of the valuable people on their team. Gallup's analyses prove that teams and organizations that take a **strengths-based approach to employee engagement** outperform teams and organizations that do not take such an approach in terms of key outcomes such as profit, customer and employee engagement, and turnover (Davenport 2018).

In the process of delegating, trusting and creating an atmosphere of collaboration, the leader provides a space for more effective communication. Communication is a team process that has been identified as key to improving team performance as it facilitates the development of integral team processes and outcomes. Hence, within the literature, the relationship between team communication and performance is often assessed (Marlow 2017). The last few years have seen an increasing number of organisations using remote, multi-country, multi-cultural teams. Particularly post 2019 pandemic, including periods of full closure, workflow is being implemented in entirely new ways. Remote communication creates many challenges for leaders, teams, and organizations. Effective management requires new approaches. In the context of digitally mediated communication in remote and online working, much of the 'normal', warm human communication, the close eye-to-eye contact, the touch (extremely important for people who define themselves as tactile or kinaesthetic), the ability to track (albeit in many cases unconsciously) the emotions of interlocutors by verbal and non-verbal cues (including intonation, voice volume, pace), is no longer available. But we know that nonverbal communication influences perceivers as a source of motivation, concentration, enthusiasm, and a tool for receiving and maintaining attention (Zeki 2009). Furthermore, the importance of active listening and skilled use of nonverbal communication in facilitating effective communication is clear (Kacperck 1997). These contradictions in the knowledge of the importance of communication and the inability to use it effectively in the ways that were

established and normal before the pandemic makes training, developing and coaching people in teams so important to the success of the organization. If the limitations of digitally mediated communication are not addressed, the performance of teams in different cultural environments is at risk (Kenon 2019).

Effective management is taken for granted in the promotion of employees and first-line managers in the organization's hierarchy. In practice, however, the reality is often far from expectations. Good specialists or line managers do not have the necessary qualities, skills, experience or behaviours to perform the much more complex functions of middle and senior management. For one thing, the learning demands on them are arguably the highest compared to their entire career path to date. On the other hand they are very rarely provided with the resources for this learning, for example time and attention from senior management for induction into the role, for support in the normal trial-and-error process. Promoted senior managers themselves are afraid of appearing incompetent and rarely seek coaching or other leadership support. A case study of one successful case for accelerating top leadership performance in the case of Bank of America (Conger 2007), shows that a few days of training and/or mentoring, coaching, and/or other leadership support at the time of appointment and for the first 2-3 months (if at all) are woefully inadequate for managers to succeed. Rather, an ongoing process of meeting with superiors to discuss goals and other important issues (often political and outside the organization), integrating into the team, coaching and mentoring, and tracking progress is needed to ensure a high retention rate of senior managers. From there, direct losses (associated with the departure or dismissal of a valued manager) and indirect losses (high levels of disengagement of teams, inability to train a replacement, team dissatisfaction and associated low morale, loss of business knowledge, damage to customers and relationships within teams) will be minimised. In this regard, the goal setting process is seen as part of leadership development programs. Research findings on the relationship between goal setting, clarity, commitment and organizational performance (Medlin 2009) (Decker 2012) indicate that formal, structured goal-setting processes lead to higher levels of commitment, which in turn lead to improved workplace performance and optimism, and hence higher levels of individual performance. Clarity, along with the ability to resolve conflict, appear to be some of the key drivers of job satisfaction (Kaitelidou 2012). Previous research has shown how leadership is an important factor in the performance of organizations (Huang 2015) (C. S. Burke 2006). But research on what mechanisms explain the relationship between leadership and organizational

performance is still rare. Research has shown that the "black box" between them may be employee well-being specifically in relation to job engagement (Breevaart 2015) (Bakker 2010). Engagement is positively associated with positive thoughts about work, meaning, and feelings of ease. These are all positively related to employees' subjective feelings of happiness and well-being (M. Seligman 2002). Increasingly, the influence of organizational culture on the performance of organizations is being studied. Strategy, which roughly speaking means "What do we want to achieve and how do we do it?", i.e. what is the plan, has not been found to be very effective. By contrast, the strategy that can be translated as "This is how we do things here", i.e. this is who we are, is the one that really works (Brown, Daring Greatly 2012). Such a strategy includes what behaviours are encouraged and punished, what and how people use their resources, whether people feel comfortable and supported to talk about their problems, how they feel and what they need, whether mistakes are tolerated, discomfort with learning and development, using new things and giving and receiving feedback. But leaders can't give their people things they don't have themselves. That's why organizational values really need to be practiced. Leaders need to make sure that the people in their teams use coaching and mentoring to align with the organisations values (Weiner 2017).

The effort-reward imbalance model (Siegrist 2004) whose basic assumption is that lack of reciprocity between effort and reward (i.e., under conditions of high effort and low reward) will lead to agitation and stress also explains aspects of employee disengagement. According to this model, although job demands are not negative per se, they can become stressors when meeting those demands requires great effort from which the employee fails to recover adequately (Bakker 2010). An increase in job demands, such as a promotion, a new more responsible job, working under pandemic or other conditions, does not always automatically mean a decrease in commitment, burnout and chronic stress, illness. Additional factors such as trust, rapport, and support may positively influence stress, tension, and discomfort with increased demands or major changes in the workplace. Through coaching, more meaning and better relationships can be achieved and hence greater engagement and better performance (Tanskanen 2018). Through coaching one can also influence the management style of the leader who in turn, if using coaching skills, can influence the work style and behaviour of the people in his team and their attitude towards work. Research has shown a positive relationship between work engagement as a result of coaching interaction and team and organisational performance (Tanskanen 2018).

This theoretical proposition shows us an opportunity to explore the impact of effective management on organizational performance.

Thus, we formulate research hypothesis 5 (X5): effective management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences organizational performance.

Some research suggests that leader satisfaction and performance depend on relationships among multiple factors, including recognition, communication, personal development, safety, appreciation, supervision (Irving 2009). In general, employee satisfaction is widely recognized by organizations in management science and practice as a critical predictor of job performance (Dawal 2009). Research has also focused on the topic of employee satisfaction and organizational performance. In this regard, there is general agreement that achieving organizational performance and effectiveness depends on leaders' and followers' satisfaction with and sensitivity to both their socio-emotional and physiological needs (B. H. Schneider 2003). The role of the leader is again found to be significant not only for the team climate but also for the overall organizational performance. This can be illustrated by a study that found that the positive effects of anticipated development opportunities on workplace engagement (measured one month later) were significant only for those team members who felt they had a good relationship with their direct supervisor (Fletcher 2019). This research illustrates the need for direct supervisors to develop quality relationships with their subordinates in order for development programs to produce real positive psychological outcomes. Some researchers have argued that leader competence is best measured by organizational performance (Pradhan 2015). Competent leadership is built on various variables and characteristics including values, knowledge, charisma, creativity, self-confidence and courage (Asree 2010). This author argues that vision, integrity, openness, commitment and creativity of leaders ensures that all employees will succeed and that organizations will perform better. Researchers of both transformational leadership and leader-member exchange (LMX) argue that leaders are able to positively influence the attitudes and behaviors of their followers through a variety of means (Burch 2014). This theoretical basis provides us with a basis to examine the impact of leaders' personal development on organizational performance.

Thus, we formulate research hypothesis 6 (X6): personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively affects organizational performance.

Competent leaders influence their followers and organisations (Mastrangelo 2014). Leaders play a vital role in achieving organizational goals and objectives by creating a supportive environment that influences employee behavior, attitudes, and motivation. Furthermore, competent leadership enables employees to engage and improve their performance (Babcock-Roberson 2010). These authors state that leadership competence determines organizational success. According to the author of this paper, very often in practice it is not possible to isolate the influence of one factor, but it is better to consider a group of factors. For example, changes in a leader's awareness of his or her emotions, thoughts, and actions can lead to less stress and strain in the performance of his or her job. In this case, personal development and awareness could lead to more effective management and this shows us an opportunity to explore the impact of personal development on management effectiveness. Here it is good to consider the research on what is the relationship of various factors with subjective well-being (Diener 1995). Scholars have shown that not the expected and often mentioned material resources (material status, family wealth, physical beauty) but social and personal resources such as self-confidence, assertiveness, self-esteem, social skills, holding certain positions such as president of an association, group or foundation, intelligence are more strongly related to subjective well-being. Furthermore, resources are more strongly related to subjective well-being the more relevant they are to individual, valid goals and aspirations and the more useful they are in achieving personal goals. Through EC, working individually and following each leader's specific agenda, extremely valuable results can be achieved in several areas:

- Awareness of what aspirations, desires, values and goals a leader has,
- clarity on the direction to go,
- flexibility of the ways to find and use taking into account their goals and aspirations,
- Developing internal resources (personal development) to create a personal and professional life to like and enjoy,
- feedback on how far he has come and how it aligns with the meaning and satisfaction of his personal and professional life,
- check for internal harmonization and peace.

Research findings show the importance of goal setting and clarity for higher levels of engagement and individual performance (Decker 2012) (Medlin 2009). In a coaching intervention, leaders can acquire cognitive strategies to cope more effectively in stressful situations. Such strategies are mental training, achieving inner calm and positive internal

dialogue (Hidayat 2014) (Hanton 2004). This leads to an increase in self-confidence, confidence about one's own decisions and taking more responsibility. Roland Benabou and Jean Tirole report that self-confidence improves motivation (Benabou 2002), and promotes creativity, innovation and self-management (Phelan 2003). A number of studies have shown a strong link between self-confidence and transformational leadership, i.e. the benefit to the leader themselves in the process of transformational leadership (Matzler 2015) (Galante 2017) (Hill 1977). Developing leader qualities such as clarity, assertiveness, connectedness, creativity, learning and flexibility can lead to significant management effectiveness outcomes such as better goal setting, delegation and more effective communication. The theoretical basis provides us with a direction to explore the impact of leaders' personal development on effective management.

Thus we formulate research hypothesis 8 (X8): personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences effective management.

1.4. Research hypotheses and research design

On the basis of the literature review and the hypotheses put forward, we have grounds to test a conceptual model that describes relationships between the identified factors. We hypothesize that the benefits of coaching will have a significant direct positive impact on personal development. We also assume that personal development positively influences teamwork, career development, organizational performance, and effective management. The literature review also showed that we can expect the influence of effective management on teamwork, career development and organizational performance. The relationships we will test are visually represented in the figure below by the one-way arrows (Figure 19).²⁵

²⁵ There are 8 one-way arrows, and they alone describe the pattern. The bidirectional ones are either measured residuals or show correlations that are required for the model.

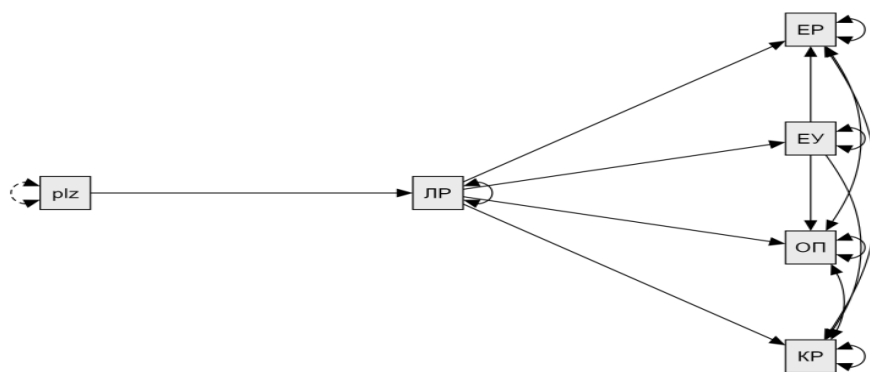


Figure 19 Conceptual research model , own research

The model includes the following 8 hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The process of executive coaching positively influences a leader's personal growth (personal development)

Hypothesis 2: Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences a leader's career development

Hypothesis 3: Effective management as an outcome of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences career development

Hypothesis 4: Effective management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences teamwork

Hypothesis 5: Effective management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences organizational performance

Hypothesis 6: Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively affects organizational performance

Hypothesis 7: Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences teamwork

Hypothesis 8: Personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences effective management

As a result of the work carried out so far, a literature review of coaching as a method and executive coaching as a specific method for personal and professional development was conducted. Based on the author's theory and practice, a conceptual model was created and eight hypotheses were advanced, which will be explored further in the paper.

Chapter 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Despite the extremely high demand for executive coaching to develop the potential of leaders, the coaching industry is still searching for its legitimacy and is still seen as an evolving field with wide variations in the extent of coaches' training, practice and outcomes of coaching-based interactions (Drake 2008) (ICF 2009) (International Coaching Federation. 2016). Although ideas about what the 'outcomes' should be or how they should be measured still remain unclear and inconsistent (Haan 2012), there are a number of in-depth analyses of coaching outcomes (Athanasopoulou in press) (Haan 2012) (Grover 2016) (M. H. Peterson 2014). Although various reports, 360-degree surveys, and studies in individual organizations have reported the effectiveness of coaching for leaders, there have been few instances in practice of quantifying the benefits (A. Grant, ROI is a poor measure of coaching success: towards a more holistic approach using a well-being and engagement framework 2012) (International Coaching Federation. 2016) (Clifton 2021) (Utrilla 2014) (Fontes 2020) - both professional and personal - with a purpose-built and validated tool.

This paper proposes a way to identify the factors that describe the benefits of EC and to measure the effectiveness of coaching as part of costly development programs for leaders. The underlying philosophical starting point for the construction of the questionnaire for the empirical study is the humanistic approach to personal and professional development, where the assumption is that each person knows best what is important to them, both personally and professionally. Potential benefits are considered in five groups: 'Personal Development', 'Career Development', 'Effective Management', 'Teamwork', 'Organizational Performance'²⁶.

The approach used to develop the thesis is that a person is a unified whole and as such their professional and personal lives are closely linked and influence each other. We constantly witness people who are successful professionally who are amazingly lonely and frustrated personally. Conversely, people who have built wonderful families who are insecure and feel unsuccessful professionally. And this dichotomy seems incomprehensible until we begin to analyze that, in fact, neither the former nor the latter feel fulfilled and meaningful because of this very divide.

²⁶ In this paper we define 'organisational performance' as: the performance of a company according to its goals and objectives (Cho 210), and as the actual performance of an organization measured against the intended performance of that organization (Tomal 2015).

2.1. Research methodology

After considering various possible methods of conducting the study, it was decided to conduct the study in the form of a survey (correspondence) study. It occupies an intermediate place in the system of partial statistical surveys and is close in design and implementation to a representative survey, in which participants are selected at random. In this partial survey, information is gathered from a certain circle of individuals who have information and know a certain phenomenon well (in our case the coaching method). It is much cheaper than representative statistical studies and it is assumed that after summarizing the information obtained, the whole phenomenon can be characterized without direct observation. An important point in survey research is the design of the questionnaire through which the data will be collected.

2.1.1. Create a questionnaire

The study was designed in several phases with the ultimate goal of uncovering the factors that describe the benefits of using the executive coaching method for professional and personal fulfillment. Furthermore, based on the questionnaire responses, to investigate whether and what the effect of EC is for the respective leader, his/her team and organization in five areas: personal development, career development, effective management, teamwork and organizational performance.

The process of creating the questionnaire went through the following phases:

1. It was decided to collect responses from leaders who had been coached (target group). A broader definition of a leader was considered for the study - anyone who has leadership roles, even if they do not formally hold a leadership position, but judge themselves to be a leader.
2. Building on the theoretical foundation of Maslow's research on self-realizing individuals, Carl Rogers' person-centered therapy, Carl Jung's individuation theory, and Jean Piaget's constructivist learning theory (Piaget 1969) and the literature studied to date, as well as the author's personal experience, a list of areas likely to be influenced by executive coaching was compiled.
3. Conversations were then held with the 12 coached leaders by phone or in person to compare the common areas of intervention and change during the coaching process and

the benefits the leaders had received, both personally and professionally, with the list previously compiled and update the list.

4. As a next step, 7 cases of coached leaders were analyzed: what were the desired changes that led them to seek coaching; the results obtained immediately after the coaching; the manifestation of the desired results and the fine-tuning up to 2 years after the coaching process (it is possible as a further development of the study to track over time how people evaluate working with a coach, as well as the impact of the quality of the relationship on the results of working with a coach).
5. The preliminary work described in 3. and 4. resulted in a final list of common areas of influence from coaching reported by interviewees and the cases analysed.
6. The set of 13 characteristics of self-actualizing people from Maslow's theory was compared with the list of results after analyzing the twelve interviews and the seven cases of coached leaders.
7. As a result, a questionnaire with 59 questions was created.

The questionnaire was designed to explore personal and professional benefits. From the theory explored, we concluded that it is better to view a leader in his or her totality - as a person and a professional. Very often in practice the client comes with a request to look at a professional area, for example, relationships with subordinates or a business partner, challenges with promotion or moving to an office with a different culture, lack of motivation at work. In the process it turns out to be about unconscious, deep personal obstacles, fears, limitations that the leader has and these manifest as the 'symptoms' they have come for. This is why the questionnaire was designed, to explore different aspects of possible benefits.

2.1.2. Content of the questionnaire²⁷

At the beginning of the questionnaire, it was explained to the participants that the study aimed to explore the extent to which people are fulfilled professionally and personally in life and whether and how executive coaching influences this process.

The first question, "Are you currently receiving or have you received leadership coaching in the past?" with "Yes" and "No" responses was designed to screen out respondents who had received coaching. Those who answer "Yes" continue with the following questions. At the beginning of the questionnaire, questions 2 and 3 explore attitudes towards coaching. Question

²⁷ See Annex 1

4 explores attitudes to learning and development. Question 5, with 50 sub-questions, explores different aspects of benefits in working towards personal and professional development based on the coaching method. At the end of the questionnaire in questions 6 to 10 respondents reveal demographic information about themselves.

2.1.3. Coding of the questionnaire responses received

The study is anonymous. Respondents are automatically assigned a serial number according to the order in which their responses are received. All questions require a mandatory response in order to proceed to completion. Only one response is possible for each question.

Answers to questions 2 and 3 are coded "yes" = 1, "no" = 2, and "can't judge" = 3. For question 4 with three sub-questions, a Likert scale was used for the responses and coded "strongly agree" = 1 to "do not agree at all" = 5, respectively. Question 5, phrased as a statement, with fifty sub-responses is similarly coded.

2.1.4. Measuring coaching attitudes and the benefits of coaching-based interactions

Google Forms was used as the platform for the 59-question/statement questionnaire. Five of the questions provided demographic information about the participants. Four of the questions explored attitudes towards coaching and development.

The remaining 50 questions/statements were divided into 5 groups to explore the views of the research participants in relation to 5 areas of potential impact of coaching based on the literature studied: Personal Development (PD), Teamwork (SW), Effective Management (EM), Career Development (CD) and Organizational Performance (OP).

The following groups of benefits were tested:

- 1.1.1.1 **Personal development.** 15 questions are included in this group. The aspects are: awareness and confidence (7 questions), acceptance and creativity (4 questions), inner peace and connectedness (4 questions). Examples: "After going through the coaching process, I am more aware of my thoughts, feelings and actions", "... I am more natural and open", "... I accept myself more as I am, even my shortcomings".
- 1.2.1.1 **Teamwork.** 9 questions are included. Aspects are: support (5 questions), acceptance (2 questions), empathy (2 questions). Examples: "After going through the coaching process, I am more interested in suggestions from employees", "... give more

useful feedback", "... can be more accepting of other people's opinions in the team, even if I disagree with them"

1.3.1.1 **Effective management.** 9 questions are included. The aspects are: communication (4 questions), motivation (2 questions), goal setting (3 questions). Examples: "After going through the coaching process, I am able to delegate more effectively", "... set goals and objectives more effectively", "... create conditions for colleagues and employees to openly share ideas for improvement"

1.4.1.1 **Career Development.** 8 questions are included. The aspects are: development (2 questions), taking responsibility (3 questions), flexibility (3 questions). Examples: "After going through the coaching process, I take on more responsibilities", "... I am more willing to learn from any situation in life and develop myself", "... I have become more proactive and am willing to create processes and approaches that optimize performance"

1.5.1.1 **Organizational performance.** 9 questions are included. The aspects are: commitment (4 questions), relationships (2 questions), improving financial performance (3 questions). Examples: "After going through the coaching process, I am more engaged at work", "... I can conduct difficult negotiations more easily", "... I have a clearer vision for the department/business"

IBM SPSS and JASP programs are used for data processing.

2.1.5. Sample characteristics

The survey was conducted online via a questionnaire that was distributed freely on Facebook and LinkedIn in November 2020. No restrictions were placed on age, gender, position, experience, size of organisation or otherwise. Participation was anonymous. 172 cards were returned by coaches, of which 3 had incomplete responses. The responses of 169 participants with complete cards were used for the study.

82% of respondents were women. 92% of respondents were aged 49 years or less, with 19% aged 25 years or less. 22% of respondents were entrepreneurs, 26% were at senior management level, 17% were at middle management level, 9% were line managers and 22% were employees. 17% of respondents are representatives of organizations with up to 9 people. Organizations with between 10 and 49 people are the most represented with 38% of respondents. 18% are representatives of organizations between 50 and 249 people and 12% of those over 250 people.

6% of respondents are freelancers. The highest performing organisations were in the service sector at 45%, followed by manufacturing at 20% and construction at 10%.

2.2. Analysis of the results of the empirical study

2.2.1. Results of descriptive statistics

2.2.1.1. Analysis of the results of univariate distributions

82% of respondents were women. 92% of respondents were aged 55 years and under, with 29% aged 35 years and under (Figure 20).

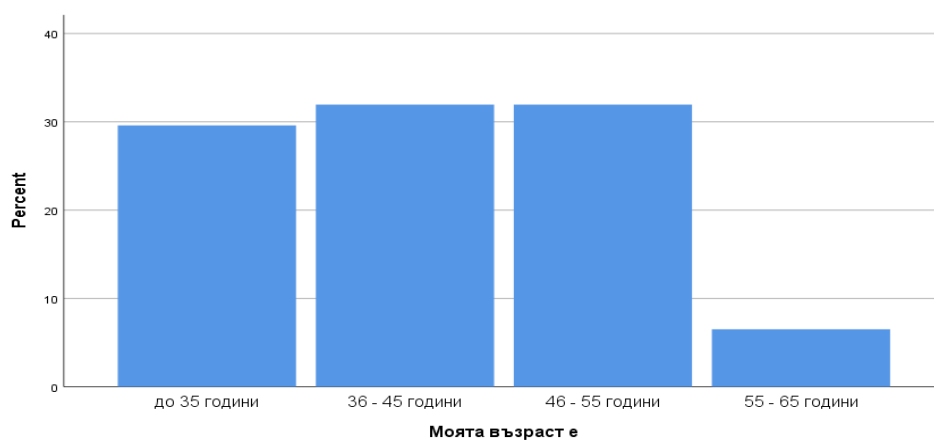


Figure 20 Demographic results for age of respondents (own study)

One of the characteristics of the entry of coaching in Bulgaria is that it happened through English-speaking multinational corporations that have the culture to develop their people in this way. Individual coaching programs are still rare. Furthermore, the author's coaching practice shows that many people from the countryside are open to this method of personal development, as long as information about it reaches them.

22% of respondents were entrepreneurs, 12% were at senior management level, 23% were at middle management level, 9% were line managers and 22% were employees. There is a large lag here in the use of coaching to develop the potential of senior managers and entrepreneurs, compared to the levels seen in the US and other countries in Europe where coaching is a typical

method and is used much more frequently (Figure 21).

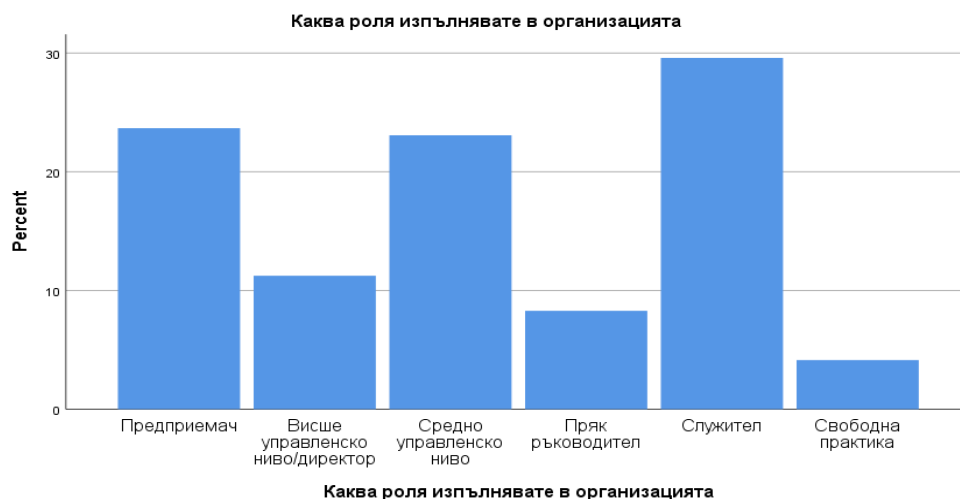


Figure 21 Results for role in the organization, own study

The largest percentage of participants work in organizations with more than 250 people (29%). This can be explained by the fact that most of them are multinational and in them coaching has been a recognised method for many years to develop people and achieve high results, as already discussed above. Even if they are not multinational, such companies usually have departments that deal with human resource development and management. Interestingly, the proportion of employees in micro businesses (1-9 people) is very high (23%) (Figure 22).

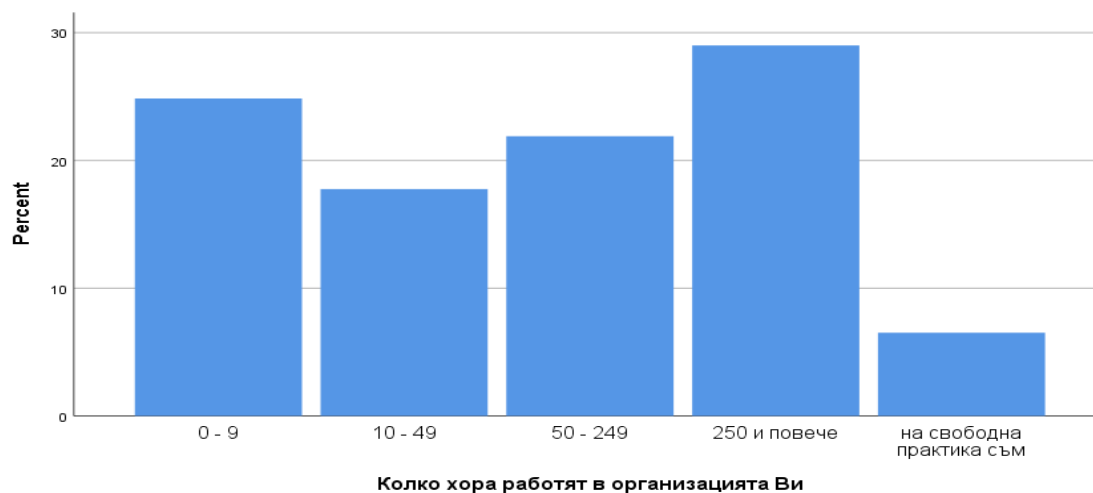


Figure 22 Organization size results, own survey

One interpretation could be because they are in a very competitive environment and are looking for the most effective methods to develop their human resource. On the other hand, it is possible to include here some of the entrepreneurs who use the method for their own development and

growth. The percentage of respondents who are freelancers is the lowest. Whether the result is due to the fact that still in our country people who practice freelance, rely exclusively on their technical and expert skills and very little effort is directed in the direction of improving communication skills, skills to manage time, customer relationships, sales, to develop marketing or other strategy. Either they do not recognize the opportunity for growth based on personal development, or they do not realize that they can change in a particular direction that is good for them, or other factors cannot be determined from this study. These interesting questions can be explored with future research.

The highest share of participants working in services (52%) and trade (14%). At the bottom of the rankings are those working in public administration, NGOs and health (2.4% each) (Figure 23).

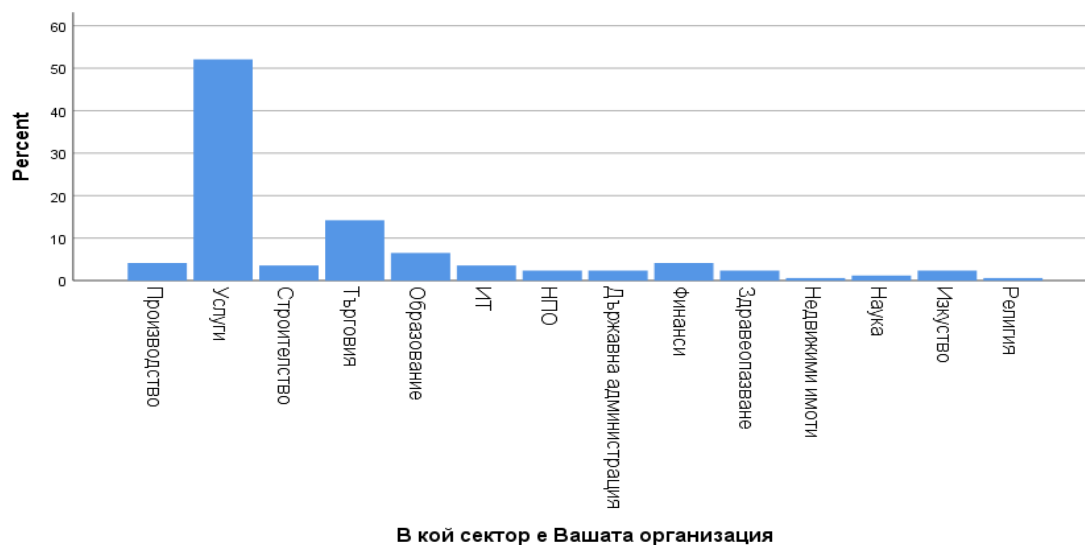


Figure 23 Results for the sector in which the organisation operates, own research

This is quite interesting and shows the attitude of these types of organizations towards their executives and employees. This is a big red flag for the author that there is a wide scope for awareness of the role of people, their need for development and growth in such organisations. The last year has seen the allocation of funds under government programmes for coaching and, although in Vator's observation these interactions are not very effective because participants are not aware of the benefits and are not convinced that they want to participate, it is still a step in the direction of using the method for personal and professional development.

In 54% of organizations, respondents said coaching is used to develop leaders and employees (Figure 24). This shows us that the coaching method is already relatively well known and used in our country for the development of key employees. In a number of studies such as Deloitte's (Deloitte 2021), Gallup International (Gallup, Turn Your Company Into a Human Development Machine etc.) the trend to use coaching as a method to develop organisations, to turn them into 'personal development machines', ultimately leading to billions of dollars in profits, is clearly visible.



Figure 24 Results for the use of coaching in organizations, own research

An extremely high 90% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that there is value in using coaching to develop the potential of people in organisations (Figure 25).

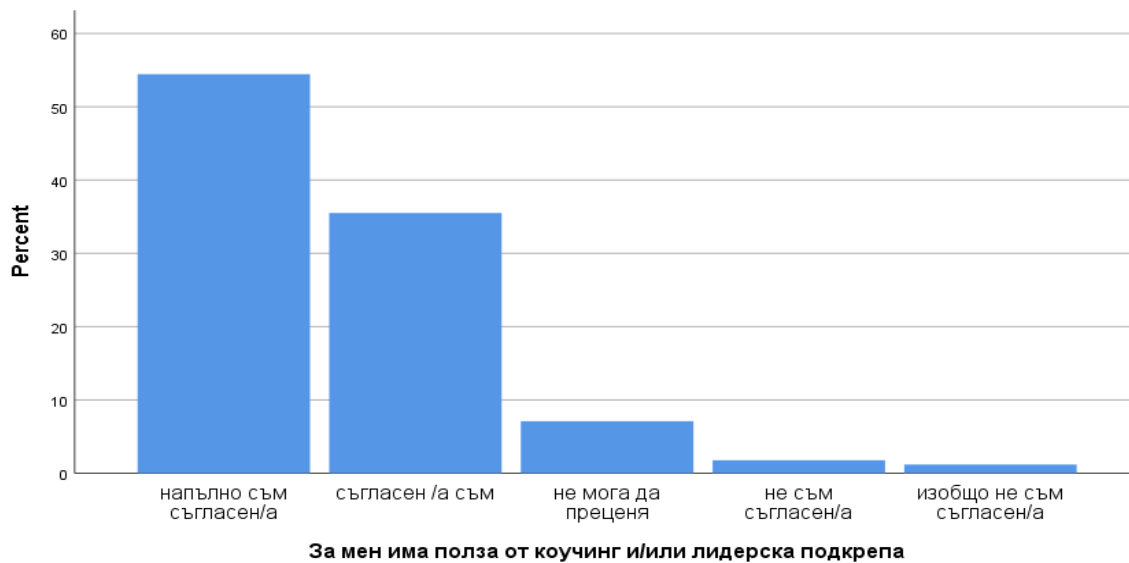


Figure 25 Coaching benefit scores, own study

With nearly 86% wanting to be coached in the future (Figure 26).

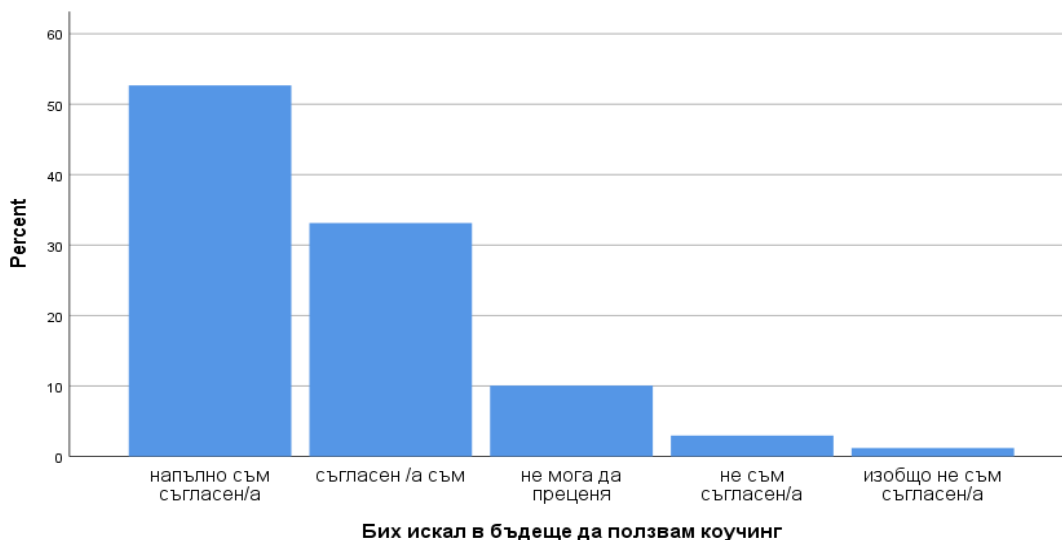


Figure 26 Scores for willingness to use coaching again, own study

Although in more than half of the cases the decision to use coaching is made by the individual, a high proportion of cases are made by the manager (27%) or the owner (15%). For 51% of participants, being coached was their own decision (Figure 27). The next most important factor was the decision of their supervisor. Interestingly, the benefits of coaching are not only considered and used by employees for their personal and professional development. Entrepreneurs and managers also recognize its importance and encourage their people to use it.

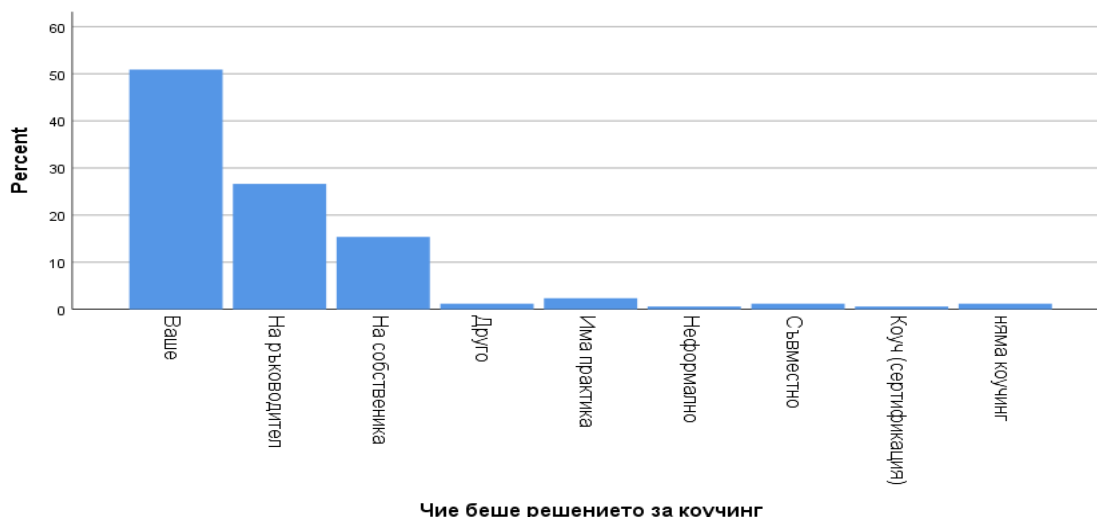


Figure 27 Results for who made the decision to use coaching, own research

Women who participated in the study were almost 4 times more than men. Some of the explanations for this may be that, as my experience shows, women are much more interested in the topic of personal development and much more often look for different ways to develop themselves, be it participating in webinars, seminars, trainings, coaching or reading/listening to literature in this field. In addition, women in our country are more open to developmental feedback. It may be due to specifics in social media algorithms. It seems to me an interesting question to investigate whether similar results are observed in similar studies abroad.

In the current study, 69% of participants reported experiencing more inner peace and calm after a coaching intervention. 82% agreed or strongly agreed that they experienced more joy in life.

It seems illogical that there is a way to help people get over obstacles in their lives and develop and it is not being used more actively.

It is interesting to bear this fact in mind and to explore it in the coming years, also in the light of new trends in learning and human resource development.

2.2.1.2. Analysis of the results of bivariate distributions

After analysing the relationships between the qualitative traits, the following significant differences were found:

2.2.1.2.1. Role in the organisation * Size of the organisation

The highest proportion of respondents from micro-organisations were entrepreneurs, while the highest proportion of respondents were line managers, middle management level respondents

in large organisations with over 250 employees, and freelancers. One explanation may be that in the dynamic and unpredictable times in which we live and work, entrepreneurs in small organisations are the drivers of change. While large firms have access to finance and external resources, Micro Enterprises despite being the backbone of the economy generally do not have access to sufficient external resources and entrepreneurs are looking for ways to develop themselves so that they can develop their people and gain a competitive advantage. Research on the factors affecting the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises in the country (Vladimirov 2013) shows that SMEs use staff training less frequently because they consider it to be insufficiently cost-effective. At the same time, research shows that learning and innovation in modern economies are inextricably linked and SMEs and countries with limited natural resources need to invest in human capital development as a competitive advantage. There is a low percentage of coached respondents among the middle management level of micro firms, but this may be logical given that micro firms have a flat structure and rarely have middle management. The unexpectedly low percentage of respondents among entrepreneurs in medium and large calibre organisations is interesting to explore further. In a study on the attitudes of entrepreneurs in Bulgaria (Davidkov 2010), an extreme individualistic balance was found in favour of entrepreneurs compared to non-entrepreneurs, which was attributed to entrepreneurs' strong drive for self-reliance and katuristic reluctance to learn. The author's experience shows a large difference between male and female entrepreneurs' attitudes towards personal and professional development. Women entrepreneurs are much more involved in their own development, attending courses, trainings, seminars and webinars, consulting with a coach, psychologist and other specialists much more often. Even the gender ratio of respondents in the present study were almost 4 to 1 in favour of women. Coaching is also actively used in large companies with more than 250 staff for the development of their middle managers and line managers. This is logical as a result because large firms in our country, mostly English-speaking, have had it embedded in their culture in recent years to pay attention to the growth of their people and, as we have already commented, coaching is an integral, albeit expensive, part of human resource development programmes in organisations (Table 1).

Table 1 Results Bivariate distribution Role in the organization*Organization size, own study

% within What role do you play in the organisation	How many people work in your organisation	Total
--	---	-------

		0 - 9	10 - 49	50 - 249	250 and more	I'm a freelancer	
What role do you play in the organisation	Entrepreneur	57.5%	20.0%	2.5%		20.0%	100.0%
	Senior Management/Director level	26.3%	21.1%	31.6%	21.1%		100.0%
	Middle management level	12.8%	12.8%	30.8%	43.6%		100.0%
	Direct supervisor		21.4%	21.4%	57.1%		100.0%
	Employee	14.0%	20.0%	30.0%	34.0%	2.0%	100.0%
	Freelance	28.6%			42.9%	28.6%	100.0%
Total		24.9%	17.8%	21.9%	29.0%	6.5%	100.0%

Cramer's V = 0.348, approx. significance = 0.001

2.2.1.2.2. Size of organisation * Age

Table 2 shows an interesting fact - 63.3% of the respondents who used coaching for their personal and professional development were people between 46 and 55 years of age, employed in small organizations between 10 and 49 people. This may be due to the possibility that in these organizations, which are still small enough, people have a sense of self-worth. And at this age of sufficient maturity to look for ways of self-development and self-realization. Such questions have not been addressed in the Bulgarian context so far and may prove to be even more interesting in the light of the importance of well-being for the contemporary development of people in organisations (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019) leading to their greater engagement at work (Deloitte 2020). There has been widespread use of coaching in both the under 35 and the 56-65 age groups in mid-sized organisations with between 50 and 249 employees. At the same time, there is a much lower than expected rate of coaching use in these organisations for individuals aged between 46 and 55. This was unexpected because practice shows that many people in this age group are interested in personal and professional development. In the future, it may be interesting to conduct research to examine both the attitudes of managers in mid-sized organizations about human resource development and the attitudes of the individuals themselves who work in such organizations about their own development. Perhaps the new trends in thinking about one's own fulfilment in work and personal terms that we have already discussed (Dachner 2019), are still popular and conscious for people in organizations that are relatively more cumbersome and slow in relation to accepting and managing change. We can say that it is an expected outcome for the large percentage of coachees in the group of 36-45 year olds in large organizations of more than 250

people. These are, again, probably the organisations that have the culture and practice to develop their people and have already seen the benefits of doing so.

Table 2 Results Bivariate distribution Size of organization*Age, own study

% within How many people work in your organisation

		My age is				Total
		up to 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - 55 years old	55 - 65 years	
How many people work in your organisation	0 - 9	23.8%	35.7%	33.3%	7.1%	100.0%
	10 - 49	20.0%	13.3%	63.3%	3.3%	100.0%
	50 - 249	40.5%	32.4%	13.5%	13.5%	100.0%
	250 and more	28.6%	40.8%	26.5%	4.1%	100.0%
	I'm a freelancer	45.5%	27.3%	27.3%		100.0%
Total		29.6%	32.0%	32.0%	6.5%	100.0%

Cramer's = 0.230, arrgoch. significance = 0.008

2.2.1.3. Size of organisation * Sector

The results of the bivariate distribution of organization sector and organization size shows a higher than expected percentage of respondents for organizations over 250 people in the information technology sector (Table 3). Interestingly, organisations again over 250 people in the finance sector, which is also experiencing transformational sector changes, for example related to the introduction of a new type of currency (crypto) as well as new technologies, again had a higher than expected number of people using coaching. Freelance individuals, who are often involved in professions and activities that benefit and help people, also sought coaching more often than expected. Interestingly, a higher than expected number of respondents were employed in educational organisations with between 50 and 249 employees. Assuming that these are educational establishments, there is a very useful trend here of educators of children and young people being increasingly engaged with their own development and growth, which inevitably leads to them being more up-to-date in their attitudes and methods of teaching.

Table 3 Results Bivariate Distribution Size of Organization*Sector, Own Research

% within How many people work in your organisation

		Which sector is your organisation in														
		Production	Services	Construction	Trade	Education	IT	NGOS	State Administration	Finance	Health	Real Estate	Science	Art	Religion	Total
How many people work in your organisation	0 - 9	4.8	61.9	7.1	14.3			4.8		2.4		2.4		2.4		100.0%
	10 - 49	10.0	56.7		13.3	3.3		3.3	3.3		3.3		3.3		3.3	100.0%
	50 - 249	2.7	35.1	8.1	27.0	13.5	2.7		5.4		2.7		2.7			100.0%
	250 and more	2.0	49.0		8.2	10.2	10.2		2.0	12.2	4.1			2.0		100.0%
	freelance		72.7					9.1						18.2		100.0%
Total		4.1	52.1	3.6	14.2	6.5	3.6	2.4	2.4	4.1	2.4	0.6	1.2	2.4	0.6	100.0%

Cramer's V = 0.352, arrg. significance = 0.003

2.2.1.4. Sector * Positive attitude for coaching interaction

From what has been said so far, the next logical relationship between the "strongly agree" response to the statement "I like receiving coaching leadership support" and the organisation's sector of operation is also evident, with a higher than expected percentage of respondents who answered yes in the IT, Education and Commerce sectors (Table 4).

Table 4 Results Bivariate distribution Organizational sector* Attitude towards coaching interaction, own research

% within Which sector is your organisation

		I like getting coaching leadership support					Total
		completely agree	I agree	I can not judge	disagree	I do not agree at all	
Which sector is your organisation in	Production	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%			100.0%
	Services	44.3%	50.0%	2.3%	2.3%	1.1%	100.0%
	Construction	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%		16.7%	100.0%
	Trade	54.2%	41.7%	4.2%			100.0%
	Education	54.5%	27.3%	18.2%			100.0%
	IT	66.7%	16.7%	16.7%			100.0%
	NGOS	75.0%	25.0%				100.0%
	State Administration	25.0%	75.0%				100.0%
	Finance	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%			100.0%
	Health		75.0%		25.0%		100.0%
	Real Estate		100.0%				100.0%
	Science	50.0%			50.0%		100.0%
	Art	25.0%	75.0%				100.0%
	Religion		100.0%				100.0%
	Total		43.8%	47.3%	5.3%	2.4%	1.2%

Cramer's V = 0.323, arrg. significance = 0.045

2.2.1.5. Sector * I would like to use coaching in the future

In this bivariate distribution, the largest proportions of respondents who said they would use coaching in the future were in the service, health and construction sectors (Table 5). From the discussion so far, it seems logical that service and IT organisations would intend to use coaching. There are indications here that there is increased interest in this type of personal and professional development method in the health and manufacturing sectors as well. In fact, many studies among medical personnel have shown the effectiveness of coaching (Gracey 2001) (Salminen-Tuomaala 2020) (McNamara 2014).

Table 5 Results bivariate distribution Sector of the organization*attitude to use coaching in the future, own research

% within Which sector is your organisation

		I would like to use coaching in the future					Total
		completely agree	I agree	I can not judge	I disagree	I do not agree at all	
Which sector is your organisation in	Production	85.7%		14.3%			100.0%
	Services	53.4%	38.6%	5.7%	1.1%	1.1%	100.0%
	Construction	66.7%	16.7%		16.7%		100.0%
	Trade	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%			100.0%
	Education	45.5%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%		100.0%
	IT	83.3%	16.7%				100.0%
	NGOS	50.0%		25.0%		25.0%	100.0%
	State Administration	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%			100.0%
	Finance	42.9%	42.9%		14.3%		100.0%
	Health	25.0%	75.0%				100.0%
	Real Estate		100.0%				100.0%
	Science		100.0%				100.0%
	Art	50.0%	25.0%		25.0%		100.0%
	Religion			100.0%			100.0%
Total		52.7%	33.1%	10.1%	3.0%	1.2%	100.0%

Cramer's V = 0.323, arrg. significance = 0.014

2.2.2. Factor analysis of the empirical study results

2.3.2.1. Essence of factor analysis

Factor analysis (FA) is a statistical method used to detect latent factors among a set of quantitative immediately measurable traits (Kharalampiev, IBM SPSS - Statistical Solutions to Applied Research Problems. 2012) (Kharalampiev, Statistical Methods in Organizational Research: Factor Analysis 2020) that explain as much of the total variance of the raw data as possible. This method reduces the number of initial variables by grouping those that correlate with each other into a common factor and separating the uncorrelated ones into different factors

(Gocheva 2012). Factor analysis allows to draw conclusions in advance about the adequacy of the inclusion of each of the measurable attributes leaving only the adequate ones.

Deterministic factor analysis is used to examine the sample in this paper²⁸. The main task in deterministic FA is to confirm or reveal the internal structure of the data (D. Lazarov 2014). Based on this type of analysis, adequate estimates of latent factors are obtained. To better distinguish the membership of the output variables/items to a particular factor, an additional transformation of the factors is performed, the so-called rotation. That is, if we have survey results (the answers to the questions of the questionnaire constructed here), we look to allocate the attributes to latent (hidden) factors that cannot be measured directly. We use deterministic factor analysis specifically because from the literature review and the author's experience we have suggested five factors to confirm or reject. FA can confirm the fit of the model using certain indices (Cole 1987).

2.2.2.2 Requirements for obtaining an adequate factor model:

In order for FA to be applied and the results to have value, there are certain adequacy requirements (Gefen 2005) (Gocheva 2012):

- Baseline data to be random
- Be of interval or relative type
- Observations must be independent
- The number of observations shall be at least 50²⁹
- Only correlated variables are involved
- The adequacy of the model was checked by pre-testing the data with the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test or (KMO test), which value should be > 0.9 . It is necessary that Bartlett's test for sphericity of the data cloud has a significance coefficient $\text{Sig.} < 0,05$. The MSA (Measure of Sampling Adequacy) values for each variable can also be checked, which is also recommended to be > 0.5 .

2.2.2.3 Sequence of the FA procedure and confirmation of results:

In order to conduct an FA, it is necessary to follow a certain sequence of actions. In conducting it, the individual analysis procedures need to satisfy a number of tests and requirements that

²⁸ In English exploratory factor analysis

²⁹ In scientific circles, there is no consensus on sample size. For some scientists, the minimum size ranges between 100 and 200 observations. For others, it depends on the number of items, the factors, the number of items to each factor, etc. (J. B. Parker 1993)

serve to confirm the resulting fact pattern (Gefen 2005) (Ang 2010) (Cole 1987) (R. Peterson 2000). We use the SPSS program to conduct the factor analysis.

The actions we carry out are as follows (Haralampiev, IBM SPSS - Statistical solutions to applied research problems. 2012):

- We check for the quality of the originally entered data. We normalize all fifty variables/bytes (we have converted them to Z-values). They are all coded with positive numbers. We have no missing data.
- To obtain an initial solution in SPSS, we select the option to reduce the factors and move all immediately measurable attributes to the Variables field. We conduct the analysis.
- We test the overall sample adequacy with the KMO test. It should have values > 0.5 , Bartlett's test for sphericity should be statistically significant, i.e. Sig. < 0.05 . The r^2 values must be > 0.5 . The adequacy of including each of the immediately measurable attributes in the analysis can be seen from the anti-image correlation table. We include the aytems whose adequacy values are > 0.5 (Kharalampiev, IBM SPSS - Statistical Solutions to Applied Research Problems. 2012).
- In order to reduce the number of aytems (the features directly measured by the questionnaire of our study), it is necessary to choose an extraction method. By default, SPSS offers the principal components method (PCA), which is one of the most commonly used methods (Osborne 2014). We work with standardized values, so we use the correlation matrix. The variables used should be correlated with each other and with the dependent variables, i.e. the bivariate correlation coefficients should be high.
- From the table of inclusion rates³⁰ we see what the contribution of each immediately measurable attribute is. The larger the number, the greater the contribution of that attribute.
- From the total explained variance table, to include a factor for further analysis, we choose Kaiser's criterion for includes. The factors with eigenvalues³¹ > 1 remain in the analysis (Kaiser 1960) (Hayton 2004) (Osborne 2014). The separated factors need to

³⁰ In English Communalities

³¹ In English eigenvalue

explain a sufficiently high percentage of the variance of the data and the first factor needs to explain $< 50\%$ of the variance explained by all factors combined.

- From the component matrix table, we examine the results line by line. The highest absolute value indicates which latent factor had a determining influence on the given attribute. All the attributes with the highest absolute value in the corresponding column are added to the corresponding factor. If there is more than one highest value per row, it cannot be determined which factor had the greatest influence, so the factors need to be rotated.
- In order to obtain factors that are maximally different from each other and to include each of the items to only one factor, we choose a rotation method. One of the most commonly used is Varimax (Osborne 2014) which is also the default method offered in SPSS. We obtain a rotated matrix. In it, we apply the logic of including the highest values of each row because they indicate which factor best explains the corresponding immediately measurable attribute.
- Selection of the number of factors. Confirm the choice of the number of factors by some method, e.g. by calculating the reproduced correlation residuals. The number of factors can be displayed visually. In the case of SPSS this is a scree plot (Hayton 2004). The factors for which the eigenvalue curve is steepest are considered. Also important in deciding which factors to retain are theoretical soundness, conceptual clarity and practical interpretation (Ang 2010). The author decided to stick to a minimum number of factors that describe the maximum percentage of the sample variance.
- Judgement to correctly group variables by factors. The grouping in the factors in the rotation matrix should be correct, i.e. a variable can only participate in one factor (correlate strongly with it) as we want the correlation coefficient to be > 0.5 and have a weak correlation with the other factors.
- We start by subtracting the items one by one and ensure that the factor weights of all the items remaining in the matrix are > 0.55 . We rotate after each iteration.
- Establishment Factors. Check for model adequacy.
- Calculation of factor values.
- Interpretation of FA factors and results.

2.3.2.4. *Conducting the factor analysis*

In SPSS, we run a factor analysis³², to allocate the aytms across factors. The principal components analysis (PCA) method of factor extraction is used to determine how many latent factors describe the sample. For this purpose, the correlation matrix is used, which contains the standardized values of the aytms. The correlation matrix is symmetric, the determinant is $3.422 \cdot 10^{-32}$, i.e. it is different from 0, hence there is no multicollinearity.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sample adequacy measure is 0.935, indicating excellent sample adequacy across all aytms. The data are suitable for factor analysis and the model is adequate. Bartlett's test for sphericity of the data cloud has a significance coefficient of Sig. < 0.01, meaning that the data cloud is spherical (Table 6). In the anti-image correlation table, the values on the diagonal are higher than the other values in the corresponding columns, which is a good sign. A check for sample adequacy for each of the aytms yields values above 0.88, indicating excellent adequacy for all 50 aytms. In the table for r^2 (communalities) the values are above 0.5 for all the aytms and these remain for further analysis.

³² From Analyse -> Dimension reduction -> Factor

table 6 Sampling adequacy results, own study

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.935
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	8803.814
	df	1225
	Sig.	.000

After applying the Varimax rotation method by deleting sequentially based on all the variables in the procedure and using the inclusion coefficient from the rotated component matrix for the calculations, the fifty atoms are assigned to five factors. These are the same five factors that have already been set as hypotheses (Table 7). The aytms mapped to the five factors explain 74.21% of the total variance of the data. The first factor explains 22.81% of the total variance of the data, which is lower than 50% of the variance explained by the five factors. This indicates that the variance in responses is due to the participants' predispositions rather than the instrument created.

table 7 Results for percentage of explained variance, own study

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	30.295	60.590	60.590	30.295	60.590	60.590	11.406	22.811	22.811
2	2.547	5.094	65.683	2.547	5.094	65.683	8.540	17.080	39.891
3	1.817	3.634	69.318	1.817	3.634	69.318	7.690	15.380	55.271
4	1.344	2.687	72.005	1.344	2.687	72.005	5.760	11.520	66.791
5	1.103	2.206	74.211	1.103	2.206	74.211	3.710	7.419	74.211

Continue subtracting the atoms one by one, rotating again after each iteration until the standardized coefficients for the factor weights of all the atoms remaining in the component matrix are greater than 0.55 (R. Peterson 2000) to include the atoms to the respective factors for which they are most important. Since there is no agreement in the literature on the issue of this value of factor weights being high enough for the analysis to be valid, the value chosen here is an average of studies published from 1964 to 1999 in journals such as the Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Retailing, and Marketing Letters (R. Peterson 2000), although this value is assumed to be lower for social science research. Thus, 9 aytms were extracted, leaving 41 aytms for further analysis. The correlation matrix is symmetric, the determinant is

equal to 1.953×10^{-25} and is different from 0. The instrument shows a high degree of reliability as measured by Cronbach's α of 0.984 for all forty-one items (Table 8). The eigenvalue of each factor is greater than 1. The Kaiser-Meier-Olkin dimension of sample adequacy is 0.944, indicating excellent sample adequacy for all the other items in the analysis. The data are suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's test for sphericity of the data cloud has a significance coefficient of Sig. < 0.01, i.e. the data cloud is spherical (Table 9).

Table 8 Sample reliability results, own study

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.984	0.984	41

Table 9 Sampling adequacy results, own study

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.944
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7292.076
	df	861
	Sig.	0.000

The final results of the factor analysis can be seen in Table 10 below. The 41 items remaining in the analysis and mapped to five factors explain 76.36% of the total variance of the data in the sample. The Cronbach's alpha instrument confirms the reliability of the questions used to each factor as in our case we have high Cronbach's alphas for each of the groups of items, above 0.89.

Table 10 Result for rotated component matrix after Varimax rotation, own study

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
I experience more often inner peace and calm	0.832				
more often I feel inner connectedness and connectedness to others and the world	0.810				
I have more meaning in my life	0.790				
more often I stay alone with myself, meditate, pray or use other practices	0.750				
I am more satisfied with myself and my life	0.744				
I have more joy in my life	0.741				
more often I have peak experiences	0.731				
accept myself more as I am, even my flaws	0.693				
more natural and open	0.673				
I trust my intuition more	0.659				
I am more creative	0.642				
take more care of yourself and your needs	0.618				
more confident in yourself professionally and personally	0.588				
I am more willing to learn from every situation in my life and to develop	0.584				
have more clarity in my personal and professional life	0.572				

I am more flexible and willing to consider different options	0.553				
I can influence my people to be more engaged at work		0.754			
I can support people in my team in their personal and professional development		0.713			
I can influence my people to be more courteous to our colleagues, customers and suppliers		0.683			
I can better take into account the emotional states of team members and clients		0.680			
it is easier to deal with ambiguities about the roles and tasks of people in the team		0.677			
I'm more interested in suggestions from the staff		0.663			
I am more often able to motivate people in my team to be more motivated and engaged		0.657			
I can be more accepting of others' opinions, even if I disagree with them		0.632			
give more useful feedback		0.627			
help increase trust between team members		0.621			
better lead the team in meeting the organization's goals		0.607			
get along better with colleagues, suppliers and customers		0.601			
management confidently assigns me more complex tasks			0.790		
look to me more often for solutions to important problems			0.785		
take on more responsibilities			0.710		
make decisions related to complex tasks and important situations more easily			0.681		
I have become proactive and am more willing to create processes and approaches that optimize performance			0.648		
I can be counted on more			0.644		
I can conduct difficult negotiations more easily				0.739	
I manage to delegate more effectively				0.593	
set goals and objectives more effectively				0.589	
communicate with people clearly and effectively				0.571	
more disciplined					0.644
more structured and organised					0.631
more engaged at work					0.614
more satisfied with work					0.554
Eigenvalues	25,86	2,30	1,58	1,31	1,01
% of Variance	24,63	20,43	15,30	8,50	7,51
Total Variance Explained			76,36		
Cronbach's alpha	,973	,962	,952	,912	,886

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

2.3.2.5. *Determination of factors*

In designing the questionnaire, it was decided to test five groups of benefits. After analysing the results of the factor analysis, it was found that it confirmed the expected benefits of interaction based on the use of coaching. The elicitations were allocated to the following five factors which correspond to the original benefit groups (Table 10). Namely, personal development (PD) with 16 assets, teamwork (TE) with 12 assets, career development (CD) with 6 assets, effective management (EM) with 4 assets and organizational performance (OP) with 4 assets.

Aytems to the relevant factors account for different aspects of the same phenomenon. For example, some of the aspects that are reported in the benefits of coaching for Personal Development are experiencing inner peace and calm more often, having more meaning in life, being more satisfied with myself and life, experiencing more joy, being more natural and open, having more clarity in my personal and professional life, being more creative and trusting my intuition more. Some of the aspects that describe the aytems allocated to "Teamwork" are I can influence my people to be more engaged in their work, I can support people in my team in their personal and professional development, I can influence my people to be more polite with colleagues, clients and suppliers, I can better acknowledge the emotional states of people in my team and clients, I can more easily deal with ambiguity about the roles and tasks of people in my team, I am more interested in suggestions from employees, I can more often motivate people in my team to be more motivated and engaged, I can be more accepting of others' opinions even if I disagree with them, I give more useful feedback. Some of the aspects that describe the athymes allocated to the Career Development factor are management confidently assigns me more complex tasks, I am sought out more often to solve important problems, I take on more responsibilities, I make decisions related to complex tasks and in important situations more easily. Some of the aspects that describe the aytems allocated to the Effective Management factor are: I can conduct difficult negotiations more easily, I am able to delegate more effectively, I set goals and objectives more effectively, I communicate with people clearly and effectively. Some of the aspects reported in the benefits of coaching for "Organizational Performance" are: I am more disciplined, I am more structured and organized, I am more engaged in my work, and I am more satisfied with my work.

2.3.2.6. *Establish and confirm the factors*

Factors are used to make a more accurate measurement than if relying on a single variable. As mentioned they describe different aspects of the trait of interest. When after factor analysis we have identified which items describe which factors and given a name to the factors, the next step is to create the factors and validate them.

We created the new complex variables in SPSS using the Transform -> Compute variable functions. To confirm the reliability of the questions used for each factor, we tested for internal consistency with the Cronbach's Alpha instrument. In our case, we have high values of Cronbach's Alphas for each of the groups of items. For the Personal Development factor, the value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.973, 0.962 is for the Teamwork factor, 0.952 is for the Career Development factor, 0.912 is for the Effective Management factor and 0.886 is for the Organizational Performance factor, as can be seen from the results shown in Table 10, which means that the respective groups of questions measure the same characteristic respectively.

As it is evident from the below Table 11, the items/characteristics describing the factor "Personal Development" after conducting factor analysis are 16. The results are presented visually with Figure 28.

Table 11 Aims describing the factor "Personal development", own research

I experience more often inner peace and calm	0.832
more often I feel inner connectedness and connectedness to others and the world	0.810
I have more meaning in my life	0.790
more often I stay alone with myself, meditate, pray or use other practices	0.750
I am more satisfied with myself and my life	0.744
I have more joy in my life	0.741
more often I have peak experiences	0.731
accept myself more as I am, even my flaws	0.693
more natural and open	0.673
I trust my intuition more	0.659
I am more creative	0.642
take more care of yourself and your needs	0.618
more confident in yourself professionally and personally	0.588
I am more willing to learn from every situation in my life and to develop	0.584
have more clarity in my personal and professional life	0.572
I am more flexible and willing to consider different options	0.553



Личностно развитие

- вътрешен мир
- свързаност
- смисъл
- насаме със себе си
- удовлетворение
- радост
- върхови преживявания
- приемане
- естественост
- доверие
- креативност
- грижа за себе си
- увереност
- учене
- яснота
- гъвкавост

Figure 28 Characteristics to the factor "Personal development", own research

The "Personal Development" factor is related to the original setting in humanist psychological and philosophical thought (Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* 1968) (C. Jung 1933) (Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory* 1951) that man strives for self-fulfillment in terms of possibilities and potentials and that this is the most natural and "normal", "healthy" state of man. At the same time, all of us know from experience that this self-fulfillment, this self-realisation, remains for most people a wishful thinking. For very often we lack clarity about who we are, what we want and what is important to us in life. To be able to operate more often in one's life in the state of self-realization requires describing what it means, being able to measure it, being able to use it - to accomplish less often things that are out of sync with who one is and more often things that can be described as self-realization, manifesting in the most meaningful and natural way for one. In this regard, the description of the factor "Personal Development" in the present study turns out to be a themes from Maslow's characterization of self-actualizing people (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 1970): experiencing inner peace and calm, connectedness to others and the world, peak experiences, meaning, joy, acceptance. In the a themes describing 'Personal Development', several were also grouped, drawn from conversations with coached leaders, namely 'I care more about myself

and my needs', 'I am more creative' and 'I am more willing to learn from any situation in my life and develop'. And while creativity is relatively well researched and described in the literature (Phelan 2003) (Rego 2012), this is not the case with self-care. The major religions pay special attention to this aspect of one's existence, e.g. the Buddhist "Searching in all directions with one's mind, one finds no dearer/dragg than oneself." (Udana V.1 2020), the Christian "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and much loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." (Bible 1940) and perhaps one of the Torah's most famous commandments, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." However, in real life, very often people do not live with self-care and many studies show how stress, fear and "shrinking" lead to physical illness in the body and psyche (Levene 2010) (Mate 2003). It is important to note the importance of self-care as a constitutive attribute of 'Personal Development', which is also in line with Gallup's research on well-being (Gallup 2021).

Quite predictably, among the characteristics were meaning, contentment, acceptance of self others, authenticity, confidence, clarity. It is interesting to note that the characteristic that respondents indicated was most influenced after coaching (84% responded "strongly agree" and "agree" to the question about how much they agreed that coaching contributed to higher awareness) turns out not to be statistically significant in describing the factor "Personal Development". This can be subjected to further research because very often in the literature there is mention of such influence (Luft 1955) (Rubens 2018) (Salminen-Tuomaala 2020). One reason for the decline of mindfulness may be, although it may sound paradoxical, the very lack of mindfulness that is typical for every stage of our personal development as humans. It is also interesting to note that the top spots in terms of severity in forming the Personal Development factor are occupied by 1. experiencing inner peace and calm more often, 2. experiencing inner connectedness and connectedness to others and the world more often, and 3. being alone with myself, meditating, praying, or using other practices more often. On the one hand, these athymemes are part of Maslow's characteristics of self-realizing individuals (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970) (Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being 1968). They are inherent in people who are mentally healthiest and realize themselves to their full potential. As previously mentioned, while early in his observations of self-realizing individuals, Maslow assumed that only 1-2 percent of all people realize their potential (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970), then in later stages Maslow, as well as other authors (Rogers, Person Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory 1951) accepted the possibility

that every person has the ability to self-actualize as long as the necessary conditions are created for this, both internal to the individual such as motivation, needs, goals, and external such as respect and esteem in the group (work or personal) in which they find themselves (Bell 2017). On the other hand, these assumptions are very rarely analyzed in the literature and only in recent years their importance has been emphasized. For example, in a survey for the Wellbeing for Planet Earth (WPE) Foundation, 72% of workers said they would prefer a more relaxed life and only 16% said the opposite (Crabtree 2021). In the unimaginable confusion, lack of security and predictability in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic this year multiplied with the unfolding of events with the war in Ukraine, people are showing that they need calm, peace and security.

Of the items with the highest weight for the Personal Development factor is also Meaning in Life. This is also a trend reported by Gallup (Gallup 2021) in relation to workforce well-being and is also embedded in many philosophical and psychological theories (Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* 1968) (Frankl 1988) (C. Jung 1933).

In recent years, well-being has been the focus of human resource management and development (Gallup 2022) (Gallup 2021). Well-being appears to be one of the top priorities of organizations (Clifton 2021). 24% of U.S. workers say they have felt great sadness the day before, 28% say they experience burnout often or always, and 70% of people globally are suffering or struggling with important things in their lives (Gallup 2022). Gallup viewed well-being as the sum of 5 aspects: meaning (how good a person feels about what they do each day and are motivated to achieve their goals), social (having genuine friendships, valued relationships, and affection), financial (managing their money well to reduce stress and increase security), physical (good health and energy to do things each day), and community (liking where they live and being safe) (Gallup 2021). In the present study, there are seven characteristics of the Personal Development factor that are related to well-being, e.g., experiences of inner peace, meaning, satisfaction, joy, naturalness, and openness.

Some of the prices that U.S. employers and society pay for workers' lack of well-being are: a \$322 billion loss from reduced productivity and turnover; a 15% to 20% loss in total payroll spending due to workers taking unpaid leave at will, primarily due to burnout; \$2 billion for every million workers due to suffering employees (Gallup 2022). Gallup finds that workers who report well-being in all five elements of well-being (purpose, social, financial, community, physical) have less absenteeism, have higher ratings from customers, solve problems more

easily, and adapt to change more quickly than employees who feel well-being in only one element of well-being, and these are characteristics that in this study describe aspects of organizational performance and teamwork.

As can be seen in Table 12 below, after a coaching interaction, participants' ratings increased in relation to all five aspects of well-being: from "I have more clarity in my personal and professional life" to "I experience more often inner connectedness and connectedness to others and the world" to "I am more satisfied with myself and my life" to "I have more joy in my life."

Table 12 Personal development scale items with more than 70% "Agree" and "Strongly agree" responses, own study

Claim: After receiving coaching, I...	"Agree" and "Strongly agree" responses (%)
more confident in yourself professionally and personally	80
have more clarity in my personal and professional life	77
take more care of yourself and your needs	76
more natural and open	75
I am more satisfied with myself and my life	74
accept myself more as I am, even my flaws	74
I trust my intuition more	73
I am more creative	72
I have more joy in my life	71
I experience inner peace and calm more often	66
more often I feel inner connectedness and connectedness to others and the world	56
more often I have peak experiences	54

The

Teamwork factor is examined in relation to leaders' professional self-realization. How people are fulfilled at work cannot be considered in isolation from who they are. Their internal world and the way they perceive and interact with the external world, their relationships with other people and organisations are linked. In the following Table 13 we can see the twelve items that after factor analysis are grouped and describe this factor. The results are presented visually with Figure 29.

Table 13 Items describing the factor "Teamwork", own research

I can influence my people to be more engaged at work	0.754
I can support people in my team in their personal and professional development	0.713
I can influence my people to be more courteous to our colleagues, customers and suppliers	0.683
I can better take into account the emotional states of team members and clients	0.680
it is easier to deal with ambiguities about the roles and tasks of the people in the team	0.677
I'm more interested in suggestions from the staff	0.663
I am more often able to motivate people in my team to be more motivated and engaged	0.657
I can be more accepting of others' opinions, even if I disagree with them	0.632
give more useful feedback	0.627

help increase trust between team members	0.621
better lead the team in meeting the organization's goals	0.607
get along better with colleagues, suppliers and customers	0.601



Екипна работа

- по-висока ангажираност на екипа
- подкрепа на екипа
- учтивост
- емоционална интелигентност
- яснота в работата на екипа
- сътрудничество
- мотивираност в екипа
- приемане
- обратна връзка
- доверие в екипа
- ефективно ръководство
- разбирателство

Figure 29 Characteristics to the factor "Teamwork", own research

Modern people work in teams - all kinds of teams: by specialisation, by function, international, multicultural, by interest, face-to-face, online, remote. And collaboration between team members is extremely important. Expected attributes include team problem-solving, motivation, performance and effectiveness to achieve organizational goals, creativity and motivation (King 2017). Leaders are those who also influence their people to be more engaged in work (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019) (Burch 2014) (Bakker 2010). From the literature review, teamwork is also expectedly influenced by the trust that honest, sincere, caring managers create in their teams (Feltman 2008) and the well-intentioned and immediate connection (Cannon 2005). The study also confirmed expectations based on the research of transformational leadership researchers and the exchanges between leaders and team members (Burch 2014) that leaders can motivate, inspire, encourage and support people in their teams to develop and learn.

The characteristic with the highest weight for the second factor, Teamwork, after a coaching intervention is, as seen in the table below, "I can influence people on my team to be more engaged in their work." 84% of people report a higher level of engagement after a coaching interaction. In parallel, however, for years Gallup has seen extremely low levels of engagement,

which for the last ten years has hovered between 21% and 19% of all working people globally (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). Of this roughly 80% disengaged, about 20% are actively disengaged, i.e. they break discipline, sabotage, abuse sick leave, involve others in actions that undermine the authority of the organization, etc. From 2000 to 2019, Germany, for example, has seen an almost unchanged extremely high level of disengagement of over 85% (roughly the same for other European countries). From this, the country loses on average about 200,000,000,000,000 BGN per year (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). Analysing the problem leads to the question of what, in fact, is not being done right. It is often assumed that engagement is the job of HR professionals. They have made plans and development programs, they solve problems. Management is not engaged in these issues, nor are the leaders in the organization, nor are the employees themselves, ultimately. Because even if HR professionals have the methods and programs, it is important that this huge engagement problem is noticed and appreciated by senior management and by the employees themselves, because management's cooperation and employees' consent is needed to participate in such an intervention. Otherwise, efforts on the part of HR are not accounted for, and cannot be effective. And so it goes: there is a way on the one hand that is not used, on the other hand, due to disengagement. The circle closes. If HR can create a small circle of people in the organization who are passionate about these issues, and these people start to act as "ambassadors" for change, influence a small group, a "pilot group" of employees first, measure the results, start negotiating with senior management, and one of the senior managers gets involved and starts to support the efforts of the others, then I believe - here was a theory I gave to the students last year - that sustainable change can be achieved, and the benefits to the organization are enormous. As the current study shows, the correlation between personal benefits (including clarity, focus and confidence in the individual) and teamwork (including commitment) is very high (0.7).

Of the other characteristics describing the Teamwork factor, such as "I can better support team members in their personal and professional development," "I can better account for the emotional states of team members and customers," and "I help increase trust among team members" describe the new trend in human resource management that has become a focus during the covid-19 pandemic, namely, seeking and finding the human element in everything organizations do (Deloitte Development LLC 2021). And this is substantially different from the policy of successive changes of recent decades and the use of "insights" in relation to the human factor to improve old methods and habits. It is now about setting new directions.

The following Table 14 shows the athymemes that clustered to the Career Development factor, which we describe when studying coaching as an element of leaders' professional self-realization programs. The results are presented visually with Figure 30.

Table 14 Aims describing the factor "Career development", own research

management confidently assigns me more complex tasks	0.790
look to me more often for solutions to important problems	0.785
take on more responsibilities	0.710
make decisions related to complex tasks and important situations more easily	0.681
I have become proactive and am more willing to create processes and approaches that optimize performance	0.648
I can be counted on more	0.644



Кариерно развитие

- доверие от страна на ръководството за сложни задачи
- решаване на важни проблеми
- отговорност
- решителност
- проактивност
- надеждност

Figure 30 Characteristics to the factor "Career development", own research

The grouping of the athymemes for the Career Development factor are expected and can be explained from the literature we have cited. Career nowadays is quite different in concept and implementation compared to 15-20 years ago, even 10 years ago. By comparison, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor (Labor 2020), the average job retention period for workers between the ages of 55 and 64 is 9.9 years, and for workers between the ages of 25 and 34 is only 2.8 years. The highest tenure with an employer by occupation is for managers with an average of 4.9 years with an employer and the shortest tenure is for people employed in the service industry with 2.9 years. To prepare for such a fast-changing working world, workers are increasingly looking for ways to develop themselves, regardless of employer (Woo 2011) and individual approaches to career management occur more frequently the more developed the economy is (J. a. Segers 2012) and individuals are more proactive and take on more responsibilities. Organizations value people who are decisive (A. C. Grant 2009). Courageous, decisive managers who are more proactive, make bold decisions and are willing to stand up after being knocked down can be relied on much more (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018).

From the results of the factor analysis described in the table above, it can be seen that the items that appear to have the highest weights for the Career Development factor can be summarised

as evidence from recent research that an individual approach to career management is becoming more prevalent rather than an organisational approach (J. a. Segers 2012). The anthems "I take more responsibility", "I have become more proactive and am more willing to create processes and approaches that optimize performance", "I can make decisions more easily related to complex tasks and in important situations" and "I can be relied on more" are in the direction of leaders taking their careers into their own hands, in which coaching plays an important role. They take responsibility for what course to take. This requires organisations to move away from the traditional command-and-control style of career management and top-down development approach and become "supportive and developmental" (Baruch 2006) while remaining actively engaged in managing the careers of their leaders (J. a. Segers 2012). We can assume that in the future more and more successful companies will rely on developing the potential of their leaders and their commitment rather than on promotions linked to seniority and contacts for policy implementation.

Table 15 shows the four athymemes that, after factor analysis of the results of our empirical study, describe the factor Effective Management. The results are presented visually with Figure 31.

Table 15 Aims describing the factor "Effective management", own research

I can conduct difficult negotiations more easily	0.739
I manage to delegate more effectively	0.593
set goals and objectives more effectively	0.589
communicate with people clearly and effectively	0.571



Ефективно управление

- успешни преговори
- делегиране
- ефективно целеполагане
- ясна и ефективна комуникация

Figure 31 Characteristics to the factor "Effective management", own study

From the literature review, quite predictably, delegation turns up here. By recognizing the talents and strengths of the people on your team (Davenport 2018) a good manager empowers them to do the work they are most competent to do and thus develop themselves (Rohlander 1999). By focusing on their people's strengths and delegating, good managers achieve higher profits, engagement, and lower turnover than organizations that do not foster such a culture (Davenport 2018). In the process of trust and empowerment, conditions are created for better communication (Marlow 2017), and it is a tool for motivation, focus and enthusiasm (Zeki 2009). Research findings show the importance of goal setting and clarity for higher levels of engagement and individual performance (Decker 2012) (Medlin 2009). We do not find research in the literature related to how the skill of conducting difficult negotiations describes effective management. However, from conversations with leaders, a clear trend emerges that negotiating with both parties external to the organization (e.g., suppliers, subcontractors, press, customers) and internal parties (e.g., managers of different teams, employees, senior management) is a core part of management skills. Negotiation skills are important and affect the vision, mission, and various policies in organizations and are interesting to explore in future research.

In positing the construct of Organizational Performance as a hypothesis in the process of deriving the benefits of EC for leaders' professional self-realization, based on the literature review, we had reason to believe that characteristics such as having a clear vision for the department/business, optimizing costs, contributing to customer satisfaction, and contributing to the financial health of the organization would be among the constructs describing organizational performance. But even after talking to leaders who had used coaching, it was apparent that these characteristics were not the focus of attention. They represent an interesting topic for future research.

As expected, clear and effective communication and delegation describe effective management. Delegation is equally important for both parties. On the one hand leaders maintain their physical, emotional and mental equilibrium. On the other, the manager provides his team members with opportunities to develop personally and professionally, and a collaborative climate is created that encourages innovation and creativity (de Vries 2011). This is also strongly related to empowerment - giving voice to employees at different levels in the organisation by sharing information and delegating to them the work they are most competent to do. Setting a clear goal is enough for a team that is trusted and speaks boldly (Brown, Dare

to Lead 2018), by giving freedom for people to be flexible about the methods they use and giving timely, kind and constructive feedback, to develop and grow all (Rohlander 1999). As already mentioned the most successful managers have one skill in common and that is to recognize and use the talents and strengths of their people (Davenport 2018).

The skill of difficult negotiation appears to have the highest weight among the characteristics to describe the Effective Management factor and it has not been described in the coaching literature before. Decisiveness and responsibility expectedly have high weights in describing career development. Proactivity to create solutions and approaches to optimize workflow came out with high importance in the analysis. A large number of the items appeared to describe "Teamwork" and this was useful because many facets of this factor emerged. As shown in a large Gallup study on the behaviors of top managers (Pendell, 7 Gallup Workplace Insights: What We Learned in 2021 2022) among the characteristics of "Teamwork" are supporting people in the team in their personal and professional development, motivating them, and taking their suggestions into account. Also well researched are giving useful feedback (Villiers 2013) (Rohlander 1999) and trust (K. Kelly 1999), but emotional intelligence and understanding and acceptance of self and team members have not been studied before.

It is interesting to note that from the originally assumed characteristics describing the factor "Effective Management", the items "I create the conditions for employees to share ideas", "I am more willing to collaborate with others" and "I can have difficult conversations more easily" were dropped after the factor analysis. Perhaps this is due to the prevailing culture in organisations in Bulgaria not to collaborate, not to share ideas, not to talk. Maybe there are no collaboration skills and there is a need to develop them.

Table 16 lists the four items that clustered after the factor analysis and describes the Organizational Performance factor. The results are presented visually with Figure 32.

Table 16 Aims describing the factor "Organizational performance", own research

more disciplined	0.644
more structured and organised	0.631
more engaged at work	0.614
more satisfied with work	0.554



Организационно представяне

- дисциплина
- организираност
- ангажираност в работата
- удовлетворение от работата

Figure 32 Characteristics to the factor "Organizational performance", own research

As we expected from the literature review, engagement is important for the performance of organisations. From the low engagement at work shown in Gallup surveys for more than ten years, businesses suffer losses of around 200,000,000,000 leva per year in Germany alone (Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2019). Engagement is positively associated with positive thoughts about the workplace, meaning and a sense of ease, which are positively associated with a sense of well-being and happiness in employees (M. Seligman 2002). Discipline, in turn, appears to be more important than even intelligence for organizational success (M. a. Seligman 2005). Job satisfaction is related to commitment, well-being and performance of organizations (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018) (Elloy, The influence of superleader behaviors on organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational self-esteem in a self-managed work team 2005). Conversations with leaders who have used coaching strongly confirm similar results from factor analysis with all coached leaders noting at least two of the above characteristics as important to their department/business performance.

One of the characteristics that describe the benefits to the organization is commitment. Engagement along with job satisfaction are the "usual suspects" in many leadership studies (Gallup 2019) (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018) (Elloy, The influence of superleader behaviors on organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational self-esteem in a self-managed work team 2005). However, there are characteristics that have not received much research attention and these are structuration, organisation and discipline, the factor weights of which are very high. These are practical characteristics that can be easily measured in future research.

As we have already discussed, one of the factors of excellence and commitment is self-discipline (K. Z. Jung 2017) (Mann 2016), and research on the influence of various personality characteristics on students' grades show that self-discipline influences academic achievement (Raymond 1995) by outperforming intelligence test scores in predicting academic performance in youth (M. a. Seligman 2005). It is worth noting that "I have a clearer vision of the department/business", "I optimize costs in the business/department more often", "I contribute more to customer and supplier satisfaction" and "I contribute more to the good financial performance of the organization" are dropped from the descriptive characteristics originally assumed for the factor "Organizational performance". This may be due to the inability to directly link coaching to organisational performance across these characteristics. It may be a rare practice in Bulgarian organisations to encourage leaders to think along these lines. People may not realise what would happen if they were to link to this. Organisations may not be harnessing the potential of their people in relation to engaging them with a clear vision and strategy where people feel accountable, empathetic and committed to financial performance and customer satisfaction with customer service and experience. It may be that these are important cornerstones for further developing and harnessing the potential of leaders.

We use the results of the factor analysis, namely the five identified factors (Figure 33), in further analysis to determine whether there are any relationships and interactions between them. For this purpose, we apply the statistical method of structural modelling.

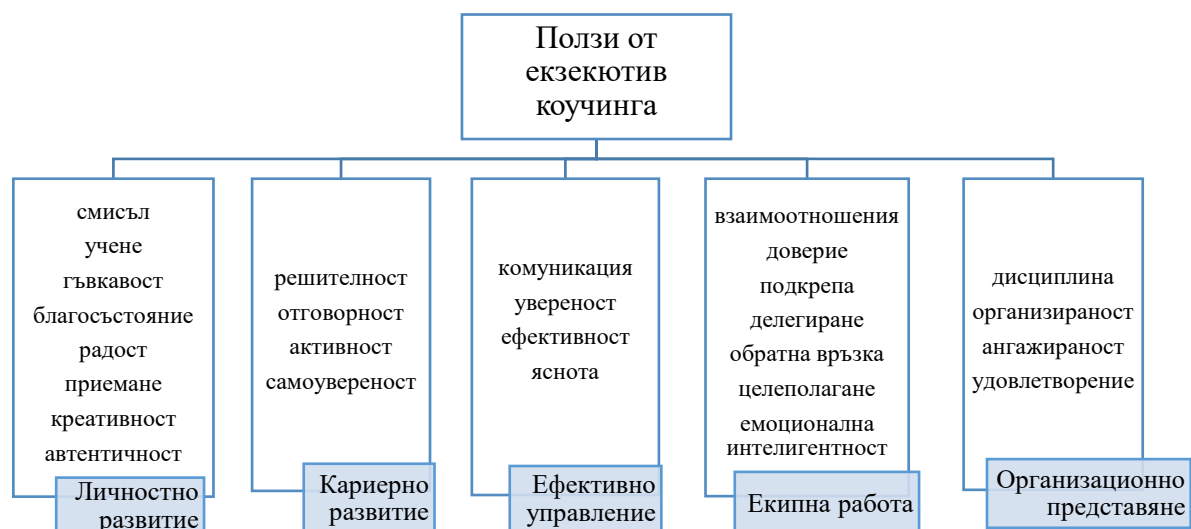


Figure 33 Model of coaching benefits for leaders, own research

2.2.3. Structural modelling³³ to explore the relationships between factors

2.3.3.1. *Essence of structural modelling*

Structural equation modelling (SEM) is a very powerful technique for investigating the relationships and dependencies between dependent and independent variables. It uses a conceptual model, a path diagram, and a system of coupled regression-style equations to capture complex and dynamic relationships in a network of observed and latent variables. Although similar in appearance, SEM is fundamentally different from regression. In regression models, there is a clear distinction between dependent and independent variables. In SEM, however, such concepts apply only in relative terms, since a dependent variable in one model equation can become an independent variable in other components of the SEM system. It is this type of reciprocal role played by the variable that allows SEM to infer causal relationships. Structural equation modelling is a kind of extension of multiple regression, but instead of a single linear equation, an entire system of equations is solved, i.e. SEM is a system of interrelated procedures. The other names of this method are analysis of covariance structures, covariance structure modeling. They emphasize that instead of a correlation matrix as in multiple regression, the output is a covariance matrix, each element of which is a covariance of two variables (Staribratov 2017). The key question is whether the model produces a predictive population covariance matrix that is consistent with the sample covariance matrix.

2.3.3.2. *Conducting structural modelling*

We use the JASP program to conduct structural modeling. To apply structural modelling the first step is to make so-called path diagrams.

Path diagrams³⁴ are fundamental to SEM because they allow the model or set of relationships posed as a hypothesis to be represented by a diagram. These diagrams are useful for clarifying ideas about relationships between variables and illustrating the conceptual model. They can be directly translated into equations needed for analysis.

2.3.3.3. *Conceptual model*

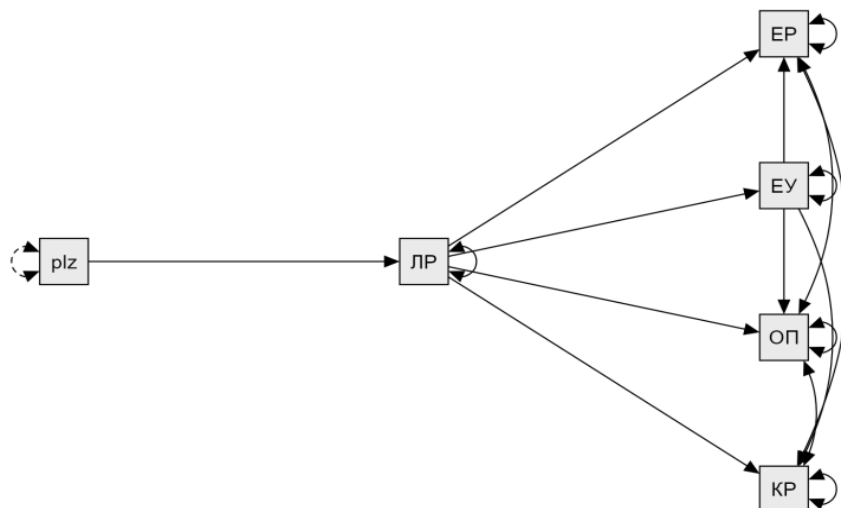
In this case, we examine the relationships between a directly measured characteristic, "Benefit of Coaching" (measured by question 4 with the statement, "I benefit from coaching leadership support") and five factors reflecting benefits of coaching, namely, "Personal Development,"

³³ Structural Equation Model

³⁴ In English path diagrams

"Teamwork," "Effective Management," "Career Development," and "Organizational Performance." That there are benefits of interaction based on the coaching method we argue based on the wording of question 5: "Having undergone the coaching process, I am..."

The model put to the test includes the following possible relationships: the EC influences the personal development of leaders. In turn, personal development contributes to teamwork, effective management, career development, and organizational performance. With structural modelling, other, more complex relationships between variables can be seen. In our case, we test whether effective management affects teamwork, career development, and organizational performance. The visual representation of the model through a path diagram is given below in Figure 2.



Graphic 1 Visual representation of the model, own research

For modeling purposes in JASP, the relationships we expect translate into the equations shown in Table 17 using the lavaan syntax (Rosseel 2012):

Table 17 Structural modelling with lavaan syntax, own research

CR~LR+EU
OP~LR+EU
ES~LR
ER~LR
ER~EU
LR~polza

After compiling the system of equations, we apply structural modelling and obtain the model visually represented by Figure 3.

2.2.3.3.1. Model validation

Although structural equation modeling (SEM) has become one of the most used techniques by researchers (especially in the social sciences), the question of how the model that best represents the data reflects the underlying theory, known as model consistency, has generated much debate (Hooper 2008) (Schermelleh-Engel 2003). Not only are there a large number of indices for measuring model consistency, but there is also debate about the acceptable values. It is therefore important to validate the model (Hu 1999) (Marsh 1988) (Duncan 1966) (Kesteren 2022). For the present paper, the guidelines of Prof. Engel (Schermelleh-Engel 2003).

2.2.3.3.2. Determination of model parameters

Maximum likelihood³⁵ (ML) is the most widely used function for structural equation model matching and we will use it as the estimator in JASP. This method leads to parameter estimates that maximize the probability that the empirical covariance matrix is derived from a population for which the covariance matrix implied by the model is valid.

2.2.3.3.3. Tests to reconcile the model with the empirical data

This is the process of calculating various criteria or indices of model agreement with empirical data. Most statistical methods require only one statistical index to determine the significance of the analyses. In structural modelling, several statistical indicators are used to determine how well the model fits the data. Even a good fit between the model and the data does not necessarily mean that the model is "right", but rather that it is plausible (Schermelleh-Engel 2003). It is necessary to provide a good theoretical basis for the determination of the proposed model, a process of identifying each latent factor (in the present paper this is the previously conducted and validated factor analysis). The χ^2/df ratio in the considered model is 4.73 (Table 18). The recommended values are for $\chi^2/df < 5$ and the value obtained is a good (Hooper 2008). The recommended values for $P > .001$. In our model $P < .001$ and this indicates that the model can be improved (Table 18). The comparative consistency index³⁶ (CFI) analyzes the model fit by examining the discrepancy between the data and the hypothesized model. It is generally accepted that CFI values are good to range from 0 to 1, with larger values indicating better fit. It is considered that the CFI value should be above 0.95, which is an indicator of good model

³⁵ Maximum likelihood

³⁶ In English Goodness of fit index

fit. For the model under study, the comparative consistency index is 0.98, indicating excellent consistency (Table 19). The Bentler-Bonett consistency index is 0.975, indicating excellent consistency (Hu 1999). The goodness-of-fit criterion between the model advanced as hypothesis and the observed covariance matrix (GFI) should not be <0.9. In our case, it is 0.99 and shows very good agreement (Table 20). The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) criterion³⁷ in this case is 0.1 and indicates average model consistency with reference values for average consistency between 0.08 and 0.1 (Schermelleh-Engel 2003) (Table 20). The standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) criterion has a value of 0.05 and indicates very good model consistency with reference values less than 0.05 (Schermelleh-Engel 2003) (Table 20). The variance explained by the relevant factors can be seen in Table 21. The factor loadings and the relationships between them are described in Tables 22 and 23. All relationships are statistically significant. For convenience, the results are shown in Figure 3.

Table 18 Model consistency results with empirical data, own study

	AIC	BIC	n	Baseline test			Difference test		
				χ^2	df	p	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p
Model 1	1425.478	1491.206	169	18.911	4	< .001	18.911	4	< .001

Table 19 Results for model consistency indices, own study

Index	Value
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.980
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.975

Table 20 Results for additional measures of model consistency, own study

Metric	Value
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.149
RMSEA p-value	0.007
Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)	0.054
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.987
McDonald fit index (MFI)	0.957

Table 21 Result for R square, own study

	R ²
CR	0.656
OP	0.625

³⁷ In English Root mean square error of approximation

	R²
EW	0.469
ER	0.733
LR	0.239

Table 22 Results for regression coefficients, own study

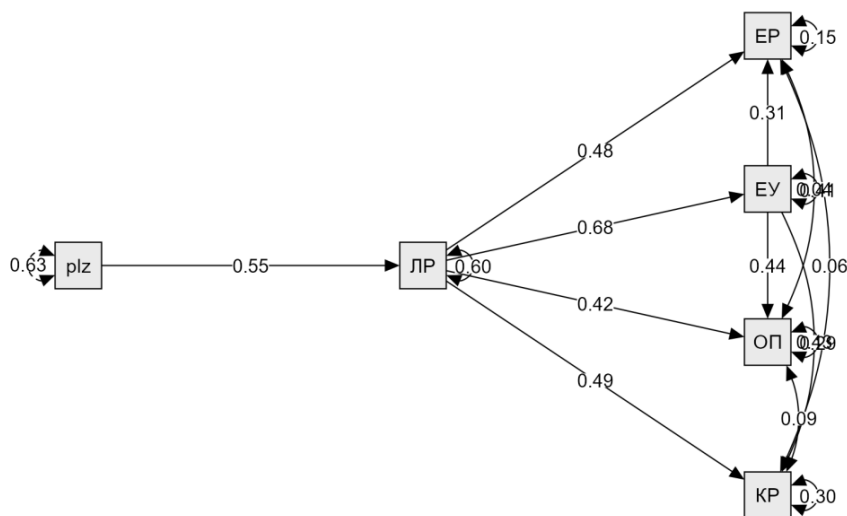
Predictor Outcome		Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
polza	LR	0.548	0.076	7.248	< .001	0.400	0.696
LR	ER	0.481	0.047	10.288	< .001	0.389	0.572
EW	ER	0.310	0.047	6.578	< .001	0.217	0.402
LR	CR	0.488	0.065	7.513	< .001	0.361	0.616
EW	CR	0.434	0.066	6.617	< .001	0.305	0.562
LR	EW	0.679	0.056	12.153	< .001	0.570	0.789
	OP	0.419	0.064	6.491	< .001	0.292	0.545
EW	OP	0.439	0.065	6.757	< .001	0.311	0.566

Table 23 Results for the residual variance, own study

Variable	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
CR	0.295	0.032	9.111	< .001	0.232	0.359
OP	0.292	0.032	9.152	< .001	0.229	0.354
EW	0.414	0.045	9.142	< .001	0.325	0.503
ER	0.152	0.017	9.108	< .001	0.120	0.185
LR	0.602	0.066	9.133	< .001	0.473	0.732
benefit	0.631	0.000			0.631	0.631

2.2.3.4. Graph of the road

Visually, the results are presented in the path graph (graph 2), which is explained in the analysis of the results below.



Graphic 2 The path graph obtained after applying structural modelling, own study

2.2.3.5. Analysis of structural modelling results

It was decided that structural modelling would be used to investigate the relationships between the factors. The method was applied, the results validated. Eight research hypotheses were tested, the results for which we analyse below. Visually, the results are represented by Figure 3.

Although we most often associate coaching for leaders with a person's professional performance, and it is very often, in 49% of the cases, as the results of the descriptive statistics of the study³⁸ showed, commissioned by the management or business owner, coaching and receiving personal benefits are very highly correlated. The humanistic and trans-personal approach (which is the basis of the theoretical setting of this paper) in philosophy and psychology (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970) (Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being 1968) (Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory 1951) (C. Jung 1933) views the person as continually seeking to develop and grow, whether this process is called individuation, self-realization, or achieving inner congruence/coherence. As previously discussed, coaching is an effective way to support leaders in such a process. As the structural modelling shows, if the "Benefits of coaching" increases by one point, the

³⁸ See Figure 27

"Personal development" factor increases by 0.55 points and the results, as we commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (Table 22). This result is consistent with our expectation of a similar relationship based on the theoretical basis that links coaching to experiential learning (Rogers, Freedom to Learn 1959). According to Carl Rogers, the effective learning and development of great leaders occurs in relation to their own needs - strategic, economic, emotional and intellectual (Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957). At the same time, self-realization is a process, an action, a continuous change. This cannot but be related to Michael Merzenik's theory of neuroplasticity³⁹ (M. V. Merzenich 2014) (M. Merzenich 2018). The ability of the human brain to continuously reorganize itself, here and now, regardless of a person's age or stage of brain development, supports any kind of lifelong learning (Boyd 2015). Jack Masiro's transformational learning, associated with a change in so-called meaning perspective (Mezirow, Perspective Transformation 1977) (Mezirow, Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning 1991) also supports people to think critically and live meaningfully. Coaching as a method of personal development is unconditionally based on the described ideas of lifelong learning, development in each moment and self-realization. The opportunity for leaders who use it to be more fully in tune with who they are as people, more aware of their values, needs and desires, and to gain the practical strategies needed to deal with various challenges, step out of their comfort zone, and develop their strongest qualities and talents, to be confident and accepting of themselves and others, living in inner peace and balance are practically appreciated by respondents in our study. The results of the structural modeling confirmed the first research **hypothesis 1** that "The process of executive coaching positively influences the growth of the leader's personality (personal development)".

As the structural modelling shows, if the Personal Development factor increases by one point, then the Career Development factor increases by 0.49 points and the results, as commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (Table 22). This structural modelling result is consistent with our analyses in the theoretical section, where we have already considered that career has been shown to have a clear relationship with well-being in our lives (Rath 2010). Wellbeing in its spiritual aspect is directly linked to spirituality in the workplace (Garcia-Zamar 2003). Spirituality is recognizing that people come to work with more than their bodies and minds, that they bring individual talents and a unique spirit. Traditionally, organizations have

³⁹ In English Neuroplasticity

ignored this basic fact of human nature. In recent decades, businesses have increasingly explored spiritual concepts such as trust, harmony, honesty, and other values for their power to help organizations achieve business goals. This is also the direction that Maslow charted 50 years ago (Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* 1968). Considered in the context of Kegan's theory of the five levels of awareness that modern humans possess or have the potential to achieve (Kegan 1994) for the level of meaning-making, it is not age that plays such an important role in the maturation and career development of leaders, but rather their response in terms of personal and professional development and growth, or rather their creation of self in sync with changes in the environment and one's inherent inner needs. And while traditionally career development has often depended not on the performance of a particular leader, his or her skills and talents, but on years of service or personal relationships with management, increasingly in developed economies an individual approach to career development (versus an organizational approach) is much more prevalent (J. a. Segers 2012), and organizations are becoming more supportive and developmental (Baruch 2006). Leaders are increasingly taking responsibility for their own development (Bell 2017). Coaching provides not only the development of necessary qualities and skills, but also strategies and practices for understanding themselves and the choices they make to move in their desired direction (Woo 2011). This supports **hypothesis 2** that Personal Development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences a leader's career development.

As the structural modelling shows, if the Personal Development factor increases by one point, then the Effective Management factor increases by 0.68 points and the results, as commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (see Table 22). In today's world of hyper connectivity, of multicultural of multinational teams in which people with extremely different and diverse roles, skills and values coexist, the development in leaders of a mindset and worldview associated with more confidence, flexibility, learning from every situation, of accepting oneself and others, would lead not only to more joy, happiness and satisfaction in the leader themselves, but also to greater emotional intelligence, clarity and leading teams to meet the goals of the organisation and this is important for the whole team. Various aspects of teamwork have been studied: team communication, team problem solving, performance and effectiveness, creativity, motivation (King 2017). It is crucial that the leader understands who the individual team members are, what their personal and professional goals, ambitions, and values are, in order to support them in their personal and professional development, as this

research shows. Working with joy, meaning and finding satisfaction lead to high engagement (Bendaly 2019) and to understanding and well-being. Some of managers' biggest challenges, according to Gallup research, are lack of clarity, disappointing performance reviews, and high workloads and distractions (Gallup 2019). Forty-two percent of managers strongly agree with having multiple competing priorities, compared to 27% of individual team members. Only 36% of managers say they have a clear job description and only 41% report that the tasks they are asked to do are aligned with their job description. This theoretical basis gave us the direction to investigate whether and how personal development (clarity in personal and professional aspects, learning, flexibility, joy, meaning, etc.) influence effective management described by goal setting, delegation, communication, because the same study shows that only a disappointing 30% of managers are engaged in goal setting. And a recommendation for managers to perform better is to be accountable to clarify key organizational messages and decisions to their teams. This confirms **hypothesis 8** that Personal Development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences effective management.

As the structural modelling shows, if the Effective Management factor increases by one point, the Career Development factor increases by 0.49 points and the results, as we commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (Table 22). These results are logical based on the theoretical basis we presented. From the literature reviewed, we have already established that by focusing on the achievement of certain goals, an effective manager can provide freedom to his people in choosing the methods to achieve them, supporting their development by giving feedback (Rohlander 1999). Furthermore, by delegating and trusting his people, the manager enables them to take initiative and increase their confidence not only in their abilities but also in the manager himself. The most successful managers allocate work and roles by periodically revising and reshaping them according to the qualities of their valued team members (Davenport 2018). In the process of delegating, trusting, and creating an atmosphere of collaboration, the leader provides space for more effective communication. It is extremely common in organizations to avoid difficult conversations, giving honest and productive feedback. Whether due to a lack of courage, a lack of skills, or in more than 50% of cases, a desire to fit into the accepted norms of being "nice and polite," leaders avoid honest and open relationships (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018). Rather than taking the time to proactively acknowledge and discuss employees' fears and feelings, especially in times of such profound change and turmoil, managers spend an inordinate amount of time addressing problematic

behaviors, drastically reducing trust between people on teams caused by a lack of empathy and compassion. When these processes are addressed and leaders are worked with to become more open, trusting and trust-building, communicating appropriately with their people, they are also more likely to be proactive, make bolder decisions and stand up when they have fallen (Brown, Dare to Lead 2018). Thus, they can be relied on more because they are more accountable and accepting of their actions. This confirms **Hypothesis 3** that Effective Management as an outcome of personal development following executive coaching intervention positively influences career development.

As the structural modelling shows, if the factor "Effective Management" increases by one point, the factor "Teamwork" increases by 0.31 points and the results, as we commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (Table 22). As we have already discussed in the literature review, at the current point in the development of the global economy with the high levels of technological progress and dynamism, work is mostly done in teams. Although technology and artificial intelligence can and are replacing millions of people in their jobs, creative activities and those related to psychology, learning and human development cannot be replaced by technology, at least for now. This is why multinational corporations and more forward-thinking organizations are increasingly relying on developing the people in their teams (Robison 2020) relying on relationship development and trust (K. Kelly 1999). Such relationships of honesty, openness and trust can be achieved if leaders care about and know the people in their teams - who they are as people, what is valuable to them, what their personal and professional goals and motivations are (King 2017). In the theoretical part, we looked at the scenario that is valid for an increasing number of large multinational corporations. In this scenario, leaders are coached and developed to lead with compassion, i.e. to put themselves in the shoes of others, to see the world through their eyes and from their perspective, to help them and to relieve their suffering (Weiner 2017). The more aware the leader is of what the core driving values of each person on the team are, the more compassionate they can be and lead the team/organisation to work in understanding. He can trust his people and create an atmosphere of trust. In the literature review we also talked about another aspect that proves the relationships shown after the structural modelling. The emotional intelligence of managers. People in teams pick up on their leaders' emotions and, although research on how leaders' emotions affect their people is one of the great limitations of the leadership literature (Madera 2009), it has been studied that people respond congruently with them - if leaders are cheerful and positive, then their followers

are more positive and vice versa (Bono 2006). And when managers begin to lead by considering their own and others' emotions, they can choose their behavior and thus guide the behavior of people on the team (Eberly 2013) and coach and uncover each person's strengths by helping to unlock unimaginable potential (Weiner 2017). This confirms **Hypothesis 4** that Effective Management as a result of personal development after executive coaching intervention positively influences teamwork.

As the structural modelling in our study shows, if the Effective Management factor increases by one point, the Organizational Performance factor increases by 0.44 points and the results, as we commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (Table 22). In the literature review, we were able to talk about competent leaders influencing their followers and organizations (Mastrangelo 2014). They play a vital role in achieving organizational goals and objectives by creating an enabling environment that influences employee behavior, attitudes, and motivation. Furthermore, competent leadership enables employees to engage and improve their performance outcomes (Babcock-Roberson 2010). In addition, we had the opportunity to highlight the importance of leadership to the performance of organizations (Huang 2015) (C. S. Burke 2006) and that research on the mechanisms that explain the relationship between leadership and organizational performance is still rare. Research over the past dozen years suggests that perhaps a major part of this influence is employee well-being specifically in relation to job engagement (Breevaart 2015) (Bakker 2010). Engagement is positively associated with positive thoughts about work, meaning and feelings of ease. These are all positively associated with employees' subjective feelings of happiness and well-being (M. Seligman 2002). Furthermore, organizational culture or this is who we are and "This is how we do things here" (Brown, Daring Greatly 2012) and here we include expected behaviors, the ways people use their resources, talking about emotions such as vulnerability, fear, insecurity and how people feel talking about their problems and what they need, giving and receiving feedback. But leaders can't give their people things they don't have themselves. So organizational values need to be really practiced as it is the responsibility of leaders to make sure their people use coaching and mentoring to align with the values the organization preaches (Weiner 2017). This way people can be more engaged and satisfied. Another characteristic of effective management is conducting successful negotiations. An article from the Harvard Law

School blog⁴⁰ notes that good negotiators manage to keep the ideas of opponents, on both sides, in their heads and balance by remaining both engaged and neutral to the situation (Staff 2022). This is exactly the kind of engagement that Timothy Gallwey is talking about: that of being able to observe without (being) critical, and to remain committed to the action in the best way possible at the time, but without attachment to the outcome (Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Work* 2000). This reasoning supports **Hypothesis 5** that Effective Management as an outcome of personal development following an executive coaching intervention positively influences organisational performance.

From the structural modelling, it can be seen that if the Personal Development factor increases by one point, the Organisational Performance factor increases by 0.42 points and the results, as commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (Table 22). The literature used links organizational performance in the aspect of managers' commitment as a result of improving physical and emotional environment and other work resources (Bakker 2010). Leaders' personality and performance are considered as a whole, including their social, emotional and cognitive ability (Almatrooshi 2016). Leaders' development, including recognition towards them, personal development and security, lead to satisfaction and better personal performance, which contributes to better performance of organizations (Irving 2009) (Dawal 2009). Research has shown that clear vision, openness, creativity and self-confidence among leaders, which are also seen as part of personal development, lead to better performance of organizations (Asree 2010). Also more meaning and better relationships between leaders and followers lead to greater engagement (Tanskanen 2018). This supports **Hypothesis 6** that Personal Development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences organizational performance.

Although the idea of learning being conscious, meaningful, tailored to the needs of the individual and happening throughout life is more of a 1950s idea (Rogers, *Freedom to Learn* 1959) (Cropley 1977), even nowadays many leadership development programmes are usually based on transferring knowledge, skills and behaviours and forget about the individual needs of the learner. This trend has been changing in the last few years as coaching, both individual and group, has been increasingly applied to the process of learning and developing leaders, and coaching has increasingly become a tool for transforming company cultures to more fully utilize the potential of individuals. And this is just the beginning, because in Bulgaria this practice is

⁴⁰ Harvard Law School

currently applied mainly in large multinational companies and very rarely in medium and small Bulgarian organizations. In such usually the owner or manager has had personal contact and benefit from coaching and therefore coaching is being introduced for key figures in the organisation (in case it is considered appropriate given the reduced costs of employee development and learning as a result of the covid-19 pandemic and subsequent war in Ukraine and the consequences - economic, political and psychological - of these external circumstances which neither the individual nor the organisations can control. It is only logical that when a leader develops and learns as a person, this also leads to changes in his or her working and management style. As we have seen in the literature review, usually leadership development programs focus on developing skills and habits, and very rarely work on increasing self-awareness, knowing one's own emotions, thoughts, feelings and self, which prove to be extremely important for leaders (Mirvis, Executive Development Through Consciousness Raising Experiences 2008). Emotional intelligence-knowing one's own emotions, managing them, sharing and understanding the emotions of others-has a motivating, idealizing, as well as individual impact on team (Barling 2000)which are three of the manifestations of transformative leadership. As already mentioned there is not much research and that too in the last few years on the impact of joy in work, although learning, developing and working with joy is the surest method for high commitment, both of the manager and the whole teams (Bendaly 2019) (Jalilianhasanpour 2021). And the present study joy is one of the aythem with the highest weight in the factor "Personal Development". As the structural modelling shows, the factor "Personal Development" directly and indirectly influences "Teamwork". If the "Personal Development" factor increases by one point, the "Teamwork" factor directly increases by 0.48 points. The results, as commented above, are statistically significant ($\alpha < 0.001$) (Table 22) . This is a confirmation of **Hypothesis 7** that Personal Development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences Teamwork. In addition, "Personal Development" also indirectly influences through "Effective Management" on "Teamwork" by increasing 0.28 points (Table 22). This is an interesting result and can be investigated in the future.

2.2.2. Limitations of the empirical study

The research presented in this dissertation can be seen as a serious attempt to study the impact of the EC on the personal and professional development and self-realization of leaders in our country. At the same time, there are certain limitations as follows:

1. The study is based on the humanistic idea of the wholeness of man. The design of the questionnaire, which collects empirical data, was prepared with the intention of investigating a possible relationship between the personal and professional aspects in the self-actualization of leaders.
2. Participants in the study self-identified as "leaders" after responding affirmatively to the first question, "Do you currently receive or have you received leadership coaching in the past?" There is no way to verify this in practice. To get more information about how the concepts are understood an associative experiment was carried out⁴¹, in which 28 people over the age of eighteen participated, of whom about 40% were male and 60% female. The associations for the word leader are two: leader and leader. In the associative field are the words inspire, leader, inspiring, guide, vision, lead. This experiment gives us another level of confidence that the way the word leader is understood is similar to what the research in this dissertation is about.
3. Sample representativeness cannot be guaranteed. Due to financial and time constraints, a questionnaire survey was used for the study in which 169 complete cards were returned.
4. The study is in Bulgarian. Despite the open format of the survey - Facebook and LinkedIn, only Bulgarian speakers could participate.
5. The study was based on subjective Likert scale scores for the traits considered. No other methods such as peer, supervisor or customer ratings are included. But due to the format of the study - an anonymous survey via the social platforms Facebook and LinkedIn - this could not be changed.
6. Only a finite number of attributes were examined, drawn from the theoretical review, conversations with HRD practitioners and analysis of real leaders who had used executive coaching. And, although 50 signs were examined, they cannot fully describe the benefits of EC.

⁴¹ The associative experiment consists in reading a word (stimulus) without context. Participants record for 5 seconds the first word they associate with what they read (word association). The associations are ordered according to the frequency with which they are mentioned. The word with the highest frequency is called the association. And all word associations for a given stimulus word form its association field (Gerganov 1984).

7. Due to the format of the study, it is not possible to examine the short and long term effects of EC.

2.3.4. Conclusions

To summarize the analysis so far, we can say that based on the literature review and the author's practical experience, we hypothesized the benefits of using EC for the professional and personal development of leaders in five areas (factors): personal development, effective management, teamwork, career development and organizational performance, aiming to explore the relationships between them. We created and successfully piloted a tool to analyse the benefits of EC. Using factor analysis, we created a distribution of characteristics that describe the above five factors. Most of the attributes were distributed in a predictable manner at the outset, but there were a few unexpected results. For example, of the likely characteristics of organizational performance (Zohir 2007) (Almatrooshi 2016) "cost optimization," "clear vision for the business," and "contribution to financial performance and customer and supplier satisfaction" were dropped; from the expected personal development (Medlin 2009) (Decker 2012) (Kaitelidou 2012) the characteristic 'clarity' was dropped, and from the likely for effective management (ICF 2009) (Weiner 2017) open sharing and collaboration were dropped. These are very interesting topics for future research.

Building on the available literature and the author's professional practice, we have constructed a conceptual model, a complex system of relationships and dependencies between the five factors described above, put forward as hypotheses. Using structural modelling, we tested the conceptual model and, based on various criteria and indices, checked it for consistency. The model turned out to be plausible, and since we had a good theoretical basis and process for identifying each latent factor (the factor analysis already described) we can claim with a high degree of confidence that the model is "correct" (Schermelleh-Engel 2003). In this way, we obtained confirmation of all the relationships and relationships put forward as hypotheses. They are as follows: the process of executive coaching positively influences the leader's personal growth; the personal development resulting from the use of executive coaching positively influences the leader's career development, the leader's effective management, teamwork, and organizational performance. In turn, effective management positively influences leader career development, teamwork, and organizational performance.

The results must be seen in the context of the bodies mentioned.

2.3.5. Scientific theoretical and scientifically applied contributions of the dissertation work

Over the last ten years, coaching has become increasingly widely used as a method for developing leaders and teams globally, despite limited empirical evidence of its impact (Joo 2005). This dissertation contributes to the understanding of how executive coaching impacts leaders' personal and professional fulfillment based on quantified self-assessments of 169 leaders who underwent coaching programs.

The scientific and theoretical contributions are as follows:

- A substantial review of the literature relating to the nature and specifics of EC is undertaken.
- A systematization of the effects of EC, both benefits and adverse effects, is made.
- For the first time, a conceptual link is drawn between the personal and professional benefits of coaching for leaders' self-realization.
- An instrument (questionnaire) was designed and validated to quantify the benefits of EC for the personal and professional self-realization of leaders.
- Positive links between personal self-actualization and effective management, career development, teamwork, and organizational performance are revealed.

The theoretically proven benefits of using coaching as a leadership development method have practical implications as well. Organizations can confidently use coaching to develop their key figures and entire teams. Leaders can motivate themselves, regardless of their current employer or profession/occupation, to develop themselves through coaching.

CONCLUSION

As the literature review showed, the practice of using executive coaching as part of leadership development programmes has been extremely popular in organisations, especially in English-speaking countries, over the last 10-15 years. Leading the way are the largest and most successful companies in the world such as Amazon, Google, LinkedIn, Netflix. Although coaching has been so widely and sustainably used in recent years to develop leaders and ultimately entire organizations, the theory lags far behind the practice. Whether or not executive coaching does what it claims remains unknown due to the lack of sufficient empirical evidence about what happens, why it happens, and what makes it effective or ineffective as an intervention (Athanasopoulou in press) (Joo 2005) (Kampa-Kokesch 2001) (Bacon 2003). Ideas about how benefits should be measured remain unclear, although there have been a number of in-depth analyses of coaching outcomes (Haan 2012) (Grover 2016) (M. H. Peterson 2014). So far in practice, there are not many cases of quantifying benefits (A. Grant, ROI is a poor measure of coaching success: towards a more holistic approach using a well-being and engagement framework 2012) (International Coaching Federation. 2016) (Utrilla 2014) (Fontes 2020) - both professional and personal - with a purpose-built and validated tool. Due to the fact that executive coaching is still in its infancy and most research to date has relied on feedback from coaches, it is anticipated that research taking into account the perspectives of executives who have participated in programmes using executive coaching will be able to contribute significantly to the knowledge of EC (Joo 2005).

The main aim of this dissertation was to add to the body of scholarship on the benefits of using EC to develop leaders' personal and professional potential.

A literature review was conducted as part of the study, which covered topics such as the new reality of the leadership development industry, the challenges facing leaders and organizations themselves, the problems of leadership development programs and new trends for leadership development, the humanistic approach to human development and self-realization, adult learning, transformational learning and meaningful experiential learning, and neuroplasticity. Literature related to the nature of coaching is reviewed. Its practical applications, types of coaching and models used were noted. Executive coaching is analyzed as a special type of approach to develop and support leaders in the context of organizations and teamwork. It compares this method with other commonly used methods of leader development and some of

the approaches to work that can be used by professional coaches depending on their level of training and preferences. Side effects of EC that may compromise the use of the method are analyzed.

Based on both the literature studied, the interviews and case studies of coached leaders, and the author's personal experience and practice, five types of benefits of using coaching were hypothesized:

- personal development of leaders
- their career development
- their teamwork
- their effective management and
- the performance of the organisations.

In order to test the likely benefits set out for consideration, it was decided to use a survey (correspondence) study. A questionnaire was designed to quantify the hypothesised benefits of using the coaching method for the personal and professional fulfilment of clients. The questionnaire was based on Maslow's research on self-actualizing individuals, Carl Rogers' person-centered therapy, Carl Jung's individuation theory, and Jean Piaget's constructivist learning theory. Compile a list of areas likely to be influenced by executive coaching. After speaking with twelve coached leaders and analyzing seven cases of coached leaders, a final list of common areas of influence from coaching as reported by the leaders. The set of thirteen characteristics of self-actualizing people from Maslow's theory was compared to the list of results after analyzing the interviews and cases of leaders who used coaching. A questionnaire with fifty-nine questions was created. Fifty of the questions aimed to measure characteristics of the possible benefits of using EC in order to confirm or reject the five groups of benefits put to the test, which could not be measured directly. In order to confirm the latent factors that describe the characteristics directly measured by the questionnaire of the present study, a factor analysis was conducted with the SPSS program. The expected groups of benefits were identified and confirmed.

Of the forty-one characteristics in the model, sixteen characteristics, including inner peace, meaning, satisfaction, joy, connectedness, acceptance, trust, and openness, were shown to

describe the latent factor of Personal Development. The factor Teamwork is described by twelve characteristics, some of which are influence on people, support for people, emotional intelligence, clarity, acceptance and feedback. The Career Development factor is described by six characteristics, including responsibility, decisiveness, proactivity and reliability. To describe the latent factor "Effective Management", four characteristics are included, namely successful negotiation, delegation, goal setting and communication. The factor Organizational Performance is described by four characteristics namely discipline, organization, commitment and job satisfaction.

The paper went one step further and further hypothesized relationships between the five factors revealed. It was decided to use the powerful structural equation modelling (SEM) technique and the JASP program to investigate the relationships and dependencies between the EC benefits and the five benefit groups identified in the factor analysis posed as hypotheses. A conceptual model of the links and relationships between the five factors and the measurable characteristic "Benefits of Coaching" and a path diagram were constructed. A system of coupled regression-style equations was fitted to capture the complex relationships between the observed characteristic and the latent factors. Eight research hypotheses were tested. After validating the model results, these hypotheses were confirmed. The coaching process was shown to positively influence leaders' personal growth (personal development). In turn, personal development mediates leaders' positive professional performance in terms of career development, teamwork, effective management and, ultimately, organizational performance. Additionally, effective management was found to positively influence leader career development, teamwork, and organizational performance.

The dissertation proved the eight research hypotheses about the relationships and dependencies between coaching as a leadership development method and the five types of benefits - personal development, effective management, career development, teamwork, and organizational performance.

The dissertation has highlighted some opportunities for future research, for example on the longer-term benefits of coaching for leadership development. It may also explore the attitudes of both employers and HR departments to the development of managers and leaders to their own development. Opportunities for research exist for the quality of the coach-client

relationship influences EC outcomes - personally and professionally. It would also be interesting to see if there is a difference in outcomes over time.

From what has been shown so far, we can conclude that the dissertation has achieved its objectives of demonstrating the benefits of executive coaching and the relationships and dependencies between them.

APPLICATIONS

Appendix 1 Questionnaire to measure the benefits of executive coaching

5/26/22, 9:21 AM

Самооценка за лична и професионална себerealization

1. 1. Получавате ли в момента или получавали ли сте в миналото коучинг лидерска подкрепа? *

Mark only one oval.

- Да
 Не

2. 2. Във вашата организация има ли практика да се използва коучинг за развитие на потенциала на важните за организацията служители? *

Mark only one oval.

- Да
 Не
 не знам

3. 3. Бихте ли искали да получите коучинг подкрепа за личното си и професионално развитие? *

Mark only one oval.

- да
 не
 не мога да преценя

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1A5c_1FuDNiisoX50jVdNcUVTaU05NJJ0aF8DhDjfxM/edit

2/11

4. Моля, попълнете доколко сте съгласни със следните твърдения: *

	напълно съм съгласен/а	съгласен /а съм	не мога да преценя	не съм съгласен/а	изобщо не съм съгласен/а
Податлив съм на промяна	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
За мен има полза от коучинг лидерска подкрепа	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Харесва ми да получавам коучинг лидерска подкрепа	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Не ми харесва да получавам коучинг лидерска подкрепа, защото ме задължават	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. 5. Моля, попълнете доколко сте съгласни със следните твърдения: Аз съм *

Mark only one oval per row.

	напълно съгласен/ а	съгласен /а съм	не мога да преценя	не съм съгласен/ а	изобщо не съм съгласен/ а	не е приложим
ангажиран/а в работата	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
удовлетворен/а от работата	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
структуриран/а и организиран/а	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
дисциплиниран/а	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
имам ясна визия за отдела/бизнеса	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
оптимизирам разходите в бизнеса/отдела	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
допринасям за удовлетворението на клиентите, доставчиците и/или колегите ми	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
допринасям за доброто финансово представяне на компанията/организацията/отдела	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
лесно провеждам трудни преговори	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
успявам да делегирам ефективно	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
поставям по ефективен начин цели и задачи на хората от екипа	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

комуникирам с хората ясно и ефективно	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
създавам условия колегите да споделят открито идеи за подобрене	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
склонен/а съм да сътруднича с другите	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
лесно ми е да водя трудни разговори	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
разбирам се добре с колеги, доставчици и клиенти	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
мога да влияя на хората си да са по-ангажирани в работата	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
мога да влияя на хората си да са учтиви с колегите, клиентите и доставчиците ни	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
интересувам се от предложенията от страна на служителите	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
давам полезна обратна връзка на хората от екипа	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
приемам мнението на другите, дори да не съм съгласен/а с него	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
успявам да	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

мотивирам хората
в екипа си да са
по-мотивирани и
ангажирани

подкрепям хората
в екипа си в
тяхното лично и
професионално
развитие

добре отчитам
емоционалните
състояния на
хората от екипа и
на клиентите

съдействам за
повишаване
доверието между
хората в екипа

лесно се справям
с неясноти
относно ролите и
задачите на
хората от екипа

добре ръководя
екипа си при
изпълнение
целите на
организацията

грижа се за себе
си и своите нужди

осъзнат/а съм за
своите мисли,
чувства и
действия

доверявам се на
интуицията си

естествен/а и
открит/а съм

имам яснота в
личния си и
професионален
живот

5/26/22, 9:21 AM

Самооценка за лична и професионална самореализация

имам радост в живота си	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
имам смисъл в живота си	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
преживявам вътрешен мир и спокойствие	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
креативен/а съм	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
удовлетворен/а съм от себе си и от живота си	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
приемам себе си какъвто/каквата съм, дори недостатъците си	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
оставам насаме със себе си, медитирам, моля се или използвам други практики за осъзнатост	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
изпитвам вътрешна свързаност със себе си, другите и света	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
имам преживявания, които мога да характеризирам като „внезапно чувство за интензивно щастие и благополучие“, „осъзнаване на някаква висша истина и единството на всичко“, „загуба на представа за време и място“, изострена	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1A5c_1FuDNlisoX50jVdNcUVTaU05NJJ0aF8DhDfjFXM/edit

7/11

сетивност и
екстаз

уверен/а съм в
себе си

уча се от всяка
ситуация в
живота си

гъвкав/а съм и
съм склонен/а да
разглеждам
различни
възможности

поел/а съм
големи служебни
отговорности

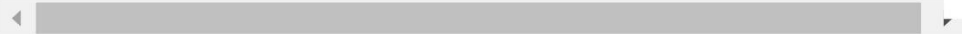
ръководството
уверено ми
възлага сложни
задачи

търсят ме често
за решаване на
важни ситуации

лесно вземам
решения,
свързани с
изпълнение на
сложни задачи
във важни
ситуации

проактивен/а съм
и съм склонен/а
да създавам
процеси и
подходи, с които
да се оптимизира
работата

на мен може да се
разчита



6. 6. Каква роля изпълнявате в организацията? *

Mark only one oval.

- Предприемач
- Висше управленско ниво/директор
- Средно управленско ниво
- Пряк ръководител
- Служител
- свободна практика
- Other: _____

7. 7. Колко хора работят в организацията Ви? *

Mark only one oval.

- 0
- 1 - 9
- 10 - 49
- 50 - 249
- 250 и повече
- на свободна практика съм
- не е приложимо

8. 8. В кой сектор е Вашата организация? *

Mark only one oval.

- производство
- услуги
- строителство
- търговия
- Образование
- ИТ
- Образование и наука
- Other: _____

9. 9. Моята възраст е *

Mark only one oval.

- до 25 години
- 26 - 35 години
- 36 - 45 години
- 46 - 55 години
- 55 - 65 години
- над 65 години
- не искам да отговоря

10. 10. Моят пол е

Mark only one oval.

- мъж
- жена
- не искам да отговоря

Благодаря Ви за времето и споделената информация! Бъдете щастливи!

Annex 2 Working Agreement

REFERENCE⁴²

Today, ..., between

1. Customer name

и

2. Name of the coach

The following agreements are hereby signed:

(Setting a framework for the relationship, duration, frequency of meetings/schedule, ground rules and guidelines to facilitate the process.)

The parties agree that the interaction based on the use of coaching shall be in terms of:

1. respect and consideration
2. attitude to learning and development
3. readiness for movement and change
4. Honesty
5. punctuality (both parties being on time for meetings)
6. the client has completed work that has been agreed for the period between meetings

We give our word on compliance with the above guidelines and commit to follow up on compliance.

Date:

Caption:

⁴² This agreement is only an example. It is not exhaustive and needs to be individually adjusted to suit specific needs.

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