METHODS AND TOOLS OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TO PROMOTE CORRESPONDENCE

Száva Zsigmond
Budapest Business School, Hungary
Assistant lecturer
E-mail: zsigmond.szava@pszfb.bgf.hu

Krisztián Kisari
Szent István University, Hungary
E-mail: kkisari@gmail.com

─Abstract─

Business life representatives are facing continuous challenges, like appointments or being newcomer in an organization. The aim of our study is mapping up the quarry of tools and methods of leadership development in a brief. These are playing a significant role and also highly contribute to achieve goals or being successful in situations of challenges.

The stock-in-trade of these methods and tools are wide. On the one hand coaching itself is one of the most well known and used personal and leadership development tool, which is also applicable in above mentioned challenge situations. On the other hand corporate governance, corporate information and decision-making supporting systems could also help the process. Those who want to become a successful leader or want to integrate into the organization have to learn and to improve beyond their innate abilities. The focus of the article is to identify how the different methods and tools promote correspondence with leadership roles and how the most often used method, as coaching could be supported my information technology.

Key Words: *Personal and leadership development, coaching*
JEL Classification: M59

1. INTRODUCTION

Within the first chapter of this article, we would like to introduce the justification of the topic: first of all give the theoretical frames and basic knowledge concerning the development methods and their trends, and show up the nowadays most often used method, the so-called coaching process.

1.1. The kick-off point

The kick of point of the article could be drawn as a question: what is the driving force in business world. Money and gain would be definitely the two most often given answers. But as in other disciplines – like in sport – the driving force could be success. In this case what or how could be success defined in business world?

The issue of a successful leader can be approached in many different ways. Those leader will be successful, who could handle the situation and meet the challenges the best. But how someone could become a successful leader? Some says, that they are born, others emphasize one can become a good leader by learning. Our conclusion according to the previous researches show that the truth is in between. (Zsigmond 2012) Those who want to become a successful leader have to learn and improve beyond their innate abilities.

Companies and corporates look like small societies. (Szabó 2013) There is a natural dynamics within the members of the societies, but this process could be also accelerate artificially. This artificial intervention could be achieved on three different levels. (Bárány 2013) In 10% of the cases it is done by the – most often expensive, but easy to imply – development of systems, like informatics. Connecting to the improvement of systems, other 30% of progress is done in processes, while leaders represent the third level of intervention with 60%. The development process of leaders means the highest possible potentials in a cheapest way. On the other hand due to its unique characteristics i.e. independent will and opinion, human resources belong to the special type of resources. (Zsigmond-Lepp 2012)

According to the model of learning values chain three levels could be secluded. (Máthé 2013) Moving from first level towards the third, the process would be more complicated, more professional knowledge is required and the effect would

be longer and bigger scaled. First level covers services, which could be interpreted as consultancy within the leadership development. The mid level represents strategic partnership, which is often translated as mentoring, while the third level is a value-adding process: one known method of the leadership and personality development is coaching.

Several methods of the leadership and personality development are known, as training, mentoring, supervision or coaching. As nowadays coaching is the most often used personal and leadership development mode, we will introduce the theoretical frames of it. Later on we will move on the differences between coaching and the other difference methods.

1.2. Coaching – the theoretical background

Around the concept of coaching an uncertainty is discernible. The notion of coaching sounds familiar in business circles, but not all of the representatives of the appointed segment are aware of its concrete meaning. It is not the topic of this article to give a full picture of coaching, but in order to understand it; we firstly wish to introduce its theoretical background in a nutshell.

Coaching is the synonym of supportive, developing, accompanying, helping, advising words, so it is the opposite of directive, solving, descriptive, rating, vindictive and rewarding expressions. Prevailing aim is to gain profit, which is nothing else, just the approach of employees, which strengthens their initial motivation. It also includes self-respect, desire of belonging to the group and self-realization with the building aspect of learning, constitution, decision-making and liability. (F. Várkonyi, 2006)

In an other approach, the definition of coaching could be divided into three parts (Zeus, 2000). Coaching is on the one hand a dialogue in a results oriented surrounding, in which the coach helps those expedients to the surface, which are known by the client – in our case the employee – but was not able to define them clearly previously. On the other hand it is a learning process, in which the coach is not a teacher, but it is definitely sure that he/she knows most probably more than the client. Thirdly, coaching is more about asking the proper question in a proper way at a proper time rather than giving a solution. The focus in this definition is on the results, because without them, no goal could be achieved.

1.3. Most often used topics within the coaching process

Within the coaching process different obstructions and challenges could be handled. In general any kind of thought, feeling, question, doubt, uncertainty or statement in which the client – in other words the coachee – is involved. These are motivation, time-management, communication – skills and different levels of communication – problem excavation, different leadership situations, preparations for decisions, decision-making, presentation skills, organizational development, delegating, project management, women is leaders roll, assertion, balance of profession and private life, handling of conflicts, handling of stress, carrier management, burn-out syndrome, supporting of newly appointed leaders or negotiation techniques. (Zsigmond 2011)

As we could see, between the most often used topics of the coaching process, there are several which also appear as everyday challenges of the leader. Therefore, coaching – and its informatics supporting – is ideal for personal and leadership development.

1.4. Coaching and mentoring – pros and cons

The terms coaching, mentoring, training and supervision are often used interchangeably, however, while they have some similar characteristics, each term gas a distinctly separate definition, function and purpose. (Beasley 2012) The term mentor originated from ancient Greece. According to Crane mentoring applies to the issues of ' enculturation, career growth, political savvy and personal network in organization. (Crane 2010 P37)

The main differences between mentoring and coaching comes from the focus of the work and the role and relationship of the mentor and the mentee. Mentor has a deeper personal interest, is personally involved, while coach develops specific skills for the task, challenges and performance expectations. (Starcevich 2009) Mentors also perform on a voluntary basis whereas coaches are hired to accomplish a particular goal. A mentoring relationship is power free, reciprocal and mutually beneficial for both individuals involved. (Starcevich 2009) The mentor's aim is to be available for the mentee as resources, while the effective coach must have the knowledge, techniques and skills that are specific to guiding

the coachee towards attaining identified goals and outcomes in a ways that is non-directive but with purpose of sustained success and change. (Maclennan 1995) The critical difference between the two terms is that mentoring is relational and coaching is functional. (Beasley 2012)

1.5. Coaching and training – pros and cons

In both methods roles are standing in the middle of the process, where the aim is the mapping of the differences between plan and fact data in order to achieve a desired state. On the other hand it involves the change or improvement of certain competences within different situations and to transplant the new knowledge into the clients own practice. (Lippmann) The differences are shown in Table 1.

Figure-1: Similarities and differences within coaching and mentoring

Coaching	Aspect	Training
Set by the coachee	Aim and topics	According to the organization
Coachee's responsibility	Responsibility	Trainer is also partly responsible
Coach= strong questioner + active listener + interlocutor	Role of the developer	Trainer=moderator + accompanying the learning process
Peer	Relationship	Kind of hierarchy
Often psychotherapy based	Tools	Tools of the higher education
Profession independent competency development	Main goal	Profession-specified competences and behaviour formation

Source: Lippman, 2010.

1.6. Other issues

Other issues, like supervision or psychotherapy are also belonging to solution-focused practices. According to Sárvári coaching was born on the borderline of psychotherapy and business consulting. (Sárvári 2008 P24) However in several cases both coaching and psychotherapy could be applied, the relationship is showing one way. As the last two methods are more problem solving, than competence developing, therefore coaching, mentoring and training are the most relevant once.

2. INNOVATION POSSIBILITIES WITHIN THE COACHING PROCESS

The motto of the introduction of the innovation possibilities could be the saying of Wayne Gretzky as 'a good hockey player plays where the puck is. A great hockey player plays where the puck is going to be.'

Speed of innovation in 1990s within the personal and leadership development process was fast, which slowed down significantly during the first decade of the new century. Nowadays cost saving and reduction are still most important intention. However as Vincze stated it is something worse to do as the sector is open for it. (Vincze 2013) One of the most common forms of appearance is the automatisation of certain part of the processes, like to sell the service – in the coaching process to search and choose the most suitable coach for the client.

It is not possible to build up a general, uniformed model for all coaching processes, which reflects perfectly the whole process as individual and organizational characteristics just appear within it. However the model could be adapted with minor changes to all kind of process.

Figure-1: Process of the Coaching process

Source: Vogelauer: 2002: 23.

Coaching process itself could be divided into five parts. The first phase is the so-called 'contact' phrase, the second one is the phase of agreement, while the longest and most efficient in time is the working phase. At the end of the coaching process – as step four and five – the closing and appraisal phases.

The first phase is about the building up of a working relationship between the coachee and the coach. At this point of the process the mutual sympathy, trust and acceptance. Furthermore it is more important for the coach to feel the commitment of the coachee for the process. From the side of the coachee the requirement is to have a working program or obstruction, a question needed to answer, to which the coaching process could be adapted.

In any case, there is a possibility of thinking between the first and the second phases. If the customer wants to really take part in the coaching process, the agreement will be done. Simultaneously, the starting situation occurs as well as the aims and the expectations of the process. The coach is mapping up the frames, the client and makes self-esteem in order to decide to start the process or not.

The longest in time and the highest level in energy appears in the working phase. This phrase itself could be also divided into several parts and different models could illustrate it. In any models the first part represents the mapping up of the situation and circumstances, which is a kind of making diagnosis and followed by setting the problem solving options and plan

The meetings in all cases are closed by retrospection in which the conversations getting closed, the discussion is summed up and there is also a forward looking, which also contribute emotionally positively to the customer. After the last session a total summary and appraisal process is also done.

The different innovation possibilities will be introduced according to the model of Vogelauer and would be underlined with two in-depth interviews.

2.1. Informatics innovation processes within the coaching process

At the beginning of the process, like looking for different type of coaches with different qualities, competences, in different coaching styles and working conditions, as well as remarkable differences in commission fees, informatics systems could support and redound the process. This is on the one hand about communicational platforms and workings of them, as well as the building up of databases and possibilities to get informed by the coach. This process would be on the other hand useful for those, who wants to get a coach, but also for the coach; to get the idea about the client – like social networking activities, working conditions or roles in the certain organization.

In the process of contracting, informatical supporting also could be relevant as into the coaching process not only the coachee and the coachee are involved, but at least a third party – often a fourth or fifth too –, the entrusting commissioner.

The development of the process could be faster and more effective with the usage of informatical support.

If the contract is set, different applications of informatics could be used for getting appointments and even send reminders of coaching meetings.

Between the meetings informatics support – and especially online applications – could ensure the continuous connection between the parties. As the meetings are rather short with a duration of maximum 90 minutes and the coachee gets from time to time so-called homework – mostly minor tasks and challenges to introduce into everyday work – on-line feedback practices could promote the effectiveness of the meetings. In that case, if there is a free forum or 'post-box', anonymous feedbacks could also be given by the coachee, the entrusting commissioner or even by the coworkers, any other third parties of the coachee. These could also serve as references.

In the investigative process on-line tests could help to mapping up the situation, the motivation level of the coachee or any other characteristics of the client – like the DISC, Hoogen or MBTI tests, while not only questionnaires, but also other mapping model, like Johari Window, which was invented by Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham in the 1950s as a model for mapping personality awareness. (Kevan Organization) It works on a basis, that from 55 previously chosen characters the client describes itself, and later ask friend and colleagues to do the same with the results that the overlap and difference can be built up. It could be done manually, but nowadays it is much more effective and transparent in an interactive informational technology supported model. We also could get more data this way.

Within the process, both the coach and the coachee should keep a log, which is more effective, faster, acceptable and retrieval doing it by the support of on-line applications. On the side of the coachee it could help to remember and go back to the basics. On the side of the coach it could help to remember the details of the meetings and also looking back in different cases to a kind of certain problems. On the top of all that, these diaries are suitable for driving the progress and make reports of it.

Feedbacks are needed from both sides. The coach could develop its work according to that. Feedbacks could deliver from the coachee, from the third party of the process or even from other stakeholders. It is easier and could be done anonymously by using any forums or blogs.

Building up databases and social network are also part of the work of the coach. This could mean both the contact list, the collection of possibly used models or tools and reference lists. Networking – like having own blog, participating at conferences and being active on certain social platforms – like LinkedIn – also important for continuous working. This is highly appreciated as the coaches acts rarely only as coaches; most often they work in other development processes.

Even the coaching process has a special characteristic, as it should happen face to face, nowadays informatics supported ways of coaching are wide spreading. The new possibilities are for example Skype-coaching, Facetiming or Facebooking. The only restriction is, that the parties should both hear and see each other.

3. CONCLUSION

According to several representatives of the professional counselors the obstruction of Hungarian economical growth is attributable how they behave. (Szabó 2013) As we outlined there are several possible personal and leadership development methods, like mentoring, coaching, supervision, psychotherapy, training and coaching. Each of the possible methods has the own advantages and disadvantages and own focus. From the introduced methods coaching is somehow in a privileged situation as it is getting more and more well-known and accepted way of development.

As it was well visible and we pointed it also out, development is required. It was also stated by several authors, that it could done in different ways. One of these ways is the support of informatics within the process. The innovational process – like apply lean coaching – is necessary, as the content – development of leaders – didn't changed during the last two decades, but the delivery improved a lot. The support of the information technology is able to change this situation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BÁRÁNY, Péter (2013), "Lean Coaching", *VI. Tanácsadói Konferencia (6th Business Consultant Conference) Presentation.* Budapest: Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

BEASLEY, Kristin L. (2012), Coaching Implementation Review, Central California Training Academy.

CRENE, T. (2010), The heart of coaching: Using transformational coaching to create a high performance culture, San Diego, FTA Press.

F. VÁRKONYI, Zsuzsa (2006): Munkaügyi Szemle *(Hungarian Labour Review)* Vol. 50. Nr. 11.

Kevan Organization (2013), Johari Window, http://kevan.org/johari [Accessed:10.04.2013.]

Lippmann, E. (2009), Coaching und Coaching-Masterlehrgang am IAP Zürich: eine Verbindung von Ansätzen aus der Gruppendynamik, der Gestalt- und hypnosystemischen Beratung. Coachingwissen. Denn sie wissen nicht, was sie tun?. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

MACLENNEN, D. – NEWTON, D. (1995) Coaching and Mentoring. London, Gower Publishing Ltd.

MÁTHÉ, Ákosné (2013), "Tapasztalatok az asztal két oldalán–vezetőből tanácsadó" *(Experiences on the two sides of the table – To become consutant) VI. Tanácsadói Konferencia (6th Business Consultant Conference) Presentation.* Budapest: Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

SÁRVÁRI, György (2004), A belső harcos útja – Coaching Kéziköny *(Coaching Handbook – Interior War)*, Sanoma Kiadó Rt, Budapest.

STARCEVICH, M. (2009) Center for Coaching and Mentorinh, Inc.

http://www.coachingandmentoring.com/ [Accessed:06.04.2013.]

SZAÓ, György (2013), "A növekedés korlátai - egy menedzser tapasztalatai" (*The Limit of Growth – Experiences of a Manager), VI. Tanácsadói Konferencia (6th Business Consultant Conference) Presentation.* Budapest: Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

VINCZE, Gábor (2013), „Az új informatikai eszközök használatára épített innovációs tanácsadás, mint a vezetési tanácsadás új területe" *(Innovational Consultaning as the new area of business consulting, based on new informatics tools) VI. Tanácsadói Konferencia (6th Business Consultant Conference) Presentation.* Budapest: Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

VOGELAUER, Werner (2002), Coaching a practice, KJK – KERSZÖV, Budapest.

VOGELAUER, Werner (2002) Alphabet of coaching Methodology, KJK – KERSZÖV, Budapest.

ZEUS, Perry & SKIFFIBNGTON, Suzanne (2000), To compete guide to coaching at work, McGraw Hill, NewYork.

ZSIGMOND, Száva (2012), „Vezető- és személyiségfejlesztés elméleti háttere sport szemlélettel a business coachingban" (*Cross–fertilization between Sport* Psychology *and Business Coaching*), Magyar Tudomány Napja 2012 *(Hungarian Science Day 2012) Working Paper 11.* Budapest: Budapest Business School.

ZSIGMOND, Száva (2011), Sportpszichológiai módszerek alkalmazási lehetőségei a Business Coachingban *(Application of Sport psychological methods in Business Coaching),* Dissertation, Budapest Business School, Budapest.

Zsigmond, Száva – LEPP, Katalin (2012), „Interoperability of coaching methods and tools in performance appraisal – a literature review" *Work in progress paper*, 7th International Conference for Young Researchers, Gödöllő.