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FACULTY OF ECONOMICS, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

ABSTRACT

of dissertation work

BENEFITS OF EXECUTIVE COACHING FOR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL SELF-REALIZATION

For obtaining the degree of Doctor of Science in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, scientific specialty Economic Management

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Contents of the abstract

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- **III. Brief Content of the Dissertation**
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1. Structure of the dissertation

The dissertation consists of 215 pages, of which 191 pages of main text, which includes an Introduction, Chapter One, Chapter Two, Conclusion, 10 pages of Appendices and 14 pages of Bibliography. The text contains 33 figures, 23 tables, 3 graphs and 2 appendices. The literature cited includes 315 sources, of which 12 are in Bulgarian.

CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation begins with an introduction. The main part is presented in two chapters. The first chapter presents coaching as a method for personal and professional development and executive coaching in particular as a method for leadership development in the context of contemporary challenges and demands on leaders, teams and s. A literature review on the topic is conducted and research hypotheses are derived. A research model is constructed. Chapter two describes the research methodology and design and analyses the data and draws conclusions. The work ends with a conclusion.

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2. Dissertation outline

2.1. Motives for developing the topic

As a practitioner with over 13,000 hours dedicated to supporting leaders in their personal and professional development on the one hand, and an entrepreneur and people and process leader with 25 years of experience on the other, the author asks three questions:

- O Why is it that since we humans were created to fulfill our full human potential and then feel joyful, fulfilled, and have meaning in both our work and personal lives, there actually comes a time in our lives to take stock and many people clearly see a "wasted", "meaningless", "sad" life and feel "failed", "unworthy", "not good enough" ?
- O How can leaders be helped to be more effective, more engaged, more joyful and more fulfilled?

И

• Will helping leaders in their personal and professional development lead to benefits for teams and s as a whole?

This dissertation is the result of years of practical work and experimentation and research into scientific theories of how the coaching method for leaders (executive coaching) can benefit leaders, their teams and entire organizations.

2.2. Relevance and significance of the study

The last two years of the mosquito pandemic have contributed to unprecedented stress and uncertainty. 2020 has officially become the most stressful year in recent human history. And this built on top of an extremely dynamic transformation towards a new globalization, which is associated with the transfer of huge databases, with the automation and robotization of professions and entire sectors of the economy. 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 recognize the importance of the well-being of their employees (even their families) and many multinational corporations such as Google, Amazon, Arple, 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 unprecedented challenges of job insecurity, job loss, increased workloads, 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

.

¹ Quotes from the author's clients.

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 the theoretical propositions of Abraham Maslow's theory of higher human needs (Maslow, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature 1967). 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 (C. 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 a conscious life of meaning (Mezirow, Perspective Transformation 1977). It is also a change of the so-called meaning perspective. which is also both the basis and outcome of executive coaching.

The questionnaire in the present study tested such changes of perspective 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.

In addition, 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 addition, in more and more multinational corporations, leaders are being trained in coaching skills so that the entire culture in organizations can turn to the employees and each one can grow and develop according 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 (R. A. Porat 2022).

Dozens of studies over the past 15 - 20 years, almost all qualitative, have related to the ways in which executive coaching impacts 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 (Burke 2007).

However, there has been little research on how personal development resulting from working with the coaching method affects leaders' career development, management effectiveness, teamwork and, ultimately, organizational performance. This research would be the contribution of this dissertation.

2.3. Object, subject and scope of the study

2.3.1. Object of study

The object of research in this study were received coaching leaders, entrepreneurs and freelancers of all age groups over 18 years, employed in different size organizations in all sectors of the economy and how executive coaching affects their personal and professional fulfillment.

2.3.2. Subject of the study

The links and relationships between executive coaching and personal development, effective management, teamwork, career development and al performance of leaders.

2.3.3. Scope of the study

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 or otherwise. Participation was anonymous. The study covered 169 respondents who returned full response cards and who had used executive coaching as a method to develop their personal and professional skills, attributes, mindsets and habits.

2.4. 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:

- Literature review
- Developing a theoretical model of the impact of coaching on leaders' personal and professional self-realization
- o Compilation of questionnaire for data collection
- Data processing and analysis
- Conclusions

2.5. 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.

2.6. Research hypotheses and conceptual model

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).²

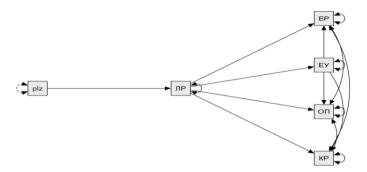


Figure 1 Conceptual research model, own research

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

² 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.

3. Brief content of the dissertation

3.1. Introduction

The introduction of the dissertation synthesizes the topicality of the topic, the aims and objectives, the research thesis and hypotheses, the methodology and the limitations of the research, which are presented in more detail in the first part of this abstract. The introduction concludes with a description of the structure of the thesis.

3.2. Chapter One: executive coaching, basic theories and concepts

3.2.1. Context of the study. New leaders.

3.2.1.1. The Leadership Development Industry

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 current leader development programs are 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).

In the last 15-20 years, coaching, and in particular executive coaching (Kampa-Kokesch 2001) (Douglas 2000) (Wasylyshyn 2003) (Ely 2010), has emerged on the scene of leadership development methods and is steadily gaining ground. The growth of programs that use the coaching method, coaches and publications on the subject is incomparably greater than before. A search of the American Psychological Association website (American Psychological Association 2022), for the period 1991 - 2000, the combination "executive coaching" yields as a result 25 mentions, for the period 2001 - 2010 the number has increased almost 15 times and now yields 372 mentions, and for the period 2011 - 2022 the number is now 830. While in previous decades coaching was only mentioned in a sport context, after 1991 it has made a permanent entry into the business context.

3.2.1.2. Challenges for leaders

At the same time, while we have available and proven methods for effectively developing managers and employees, 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) survey of around 1,300 CEOs running companies with a turnover of more than \$1 billion in 40% of cases and companies with a turnover between \$100 million and \$1 billion in 35% of cases shows that 38% of participants fear they do not have the key skills needed to lead (PwC 2018). In another study, 61% of executives reported that they were unprepared for the strategic challenges they faced when appointed to senior leadership positions. 50%-60% of CEOs fail within the first 18 months of being promoted or hired (Carucci 2017).

Low self-confidence

Although development and the need for self-actualization are essential for the leader, very often the leader does not satisfactorily achieve them because of fears, limitations, beliefs, and perceptions (Gallwey, The Inner Game of Tennis: The Classic Guide to the Mental Side of Peak Performance 1997) (Gallwey, The Inner Game of Work 2000). Consistent self-limitation leads to insecurity, low self-esteem, low self-confidence, motivation and commitment and, ultimately, frustration and unhappiness (Gallup Inc. 2015). 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). Other research has shown the relationship between self-confidence and benefits to organizations such as increased levels of commitment 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). However, self-confidence is one of the key qualities that leaders lack. For example, 32% of CEOs of U.S. organizations with between \$100 million and \$10 billion fear they do not possess the qualities needed to do their jobs (Gallup 2015). Self-confidence is a quality that leaders look to develop in themselves and is one of the main reasons to seek coaching (International Coaching Federation. 2013).

No personal liability is assumed

Today's dynamic and challenging business conditions require managers to solve complex dilemmas. These often involve choices between the financial success of organizations, 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 (inside or outside the organization) to whom he is accountable holds him accountable 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 accountable 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

Self-discipline (C. Jung 1933) appears to be one of the factors for excellence and commitment (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. Self-regulation can be used to predict the social success of the children studied decades later (W. S. Mischel 1988) (W. a. Mischel 2004). Earlier research on how different personality characteristics affect students' grades showed that of all 32 factors examined, only self-discipline influenced academic achievement (Raymond 1995). Self-discipline even outperforms intelligence test scores in predicting academic performance in youth (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.

Research has shown that self-awareness, knowing oneself, one's feelings, thoughts, states, emotions, and self, are important for developing 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 in 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 a person knows themselves and is more aware of what is important and essential to them in their professional and personal lives, they can take effective steps to move forward in the direction they desire (Kimsey-House 2011).

Low emotional intelligence

In most leadership programs, there is almost no attention paid to developing emotional intelligence. This type 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). Research shows that emotional intelligence is related to three aspects of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational influence, and individual influence (Barling 2000). Emotional intelligence is also related to calmness, understanding others, relating to 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 considering the transformation of mindset and worldview and emotional intelligence 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 they perceive reality (Amen 2013). Based on these filtered perceptions, one creates a "map of one's life" (R. Dilts, NLP 2020). If a person is helped to begin to detail, become aware of, recognize and, if necessary, change and expand his map (perceptions), he could model or, in other words, create his life in a way that brings him ever closer to his desired goals and things that are important to him, he could use them to expand his consciousness and create conditions for choices and situations that lead him to success (R. Dilts, From Coach to Awakener 2003). That is, one can consciously minimize one's limitations and realize one's full potential. In this way, he can also contribute to the development of others and society (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970).

Ineffective 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 associated with job engagement and satisfaction even in times of crisis (Shulga 2020). Research has shown the close connection between leadership, open communication, and personal and professional well-being (Jiang 2015). The skills of having honest and open conversations, of seeking and giving kind feedback, and of ending difficult conversations that can be honed during leadership programs (and through coaching in

particular) can be used not only in work contexts but also in personal relationships (Cox 2010). This is because a person is a coherent whole and personal development, in this case the development of communication and collaboration skills, influences one's management style and for better well-being (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 leads to further strain. All of this combined 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's research in partnership with the Foundation for the Wellbeing of Planet Earth. Unexpectedly, ideas usually associated with Eastern cultures are proving to be highly valued by Western ones. 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, the 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 consider how to make well-being an essential part of the employee experience.

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



Предизвикателства пред лидерите

ниска самодисцоплина 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

3.2.1.3. Challenges facing modern organizations

The majority of organizations and individuals have been virtually unable to adapt to the highly dynamic pace of development, let alone adjust their minds to it (Villiers 2013). The scale of the changes and disruptions they are causing in work, workers and work environments and

their impact on employers is so great that Deloitte speaks of 'remaking organizations', affecting them to the core (Deloitte 2020).

Low commitment of leaders

For years, Gallup has observed extremely low engagement levels, which have hovered between 21% and 19% of all working people globally for the past dozen years (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, involve others in actions that undermine the organization's authority, etc. From 2000 to 2019, Germany, for example, has seen an almost unchanged extremely low level of engagement of less than 15% of the workforce (roughly 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).

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, and revenue. There is a strong and negative relationship between engagement and work incidents, reduced production, absenteeism, and turnover (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 organizational values (Harter 2020).

Low performance

Well-being emerges as one of the top priorities for organizations (Clifton 2021). 70% of people globally are suffering or struggling for important things in their lives (Gallup 2022). Some of the prices that employers and society in the U.S. pay for workers' lack of well-being are a loss of \$322 billion in reduced productivity and turnover(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 only one element of their well-being highly. Employees with high well-being across all five elements also save their companies money on healthcare costs and turnover. In addition, such employees are 81% less likely to look for a new employer in the next year compared to employees who report well-being only in 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. Elberly's (2013) integrated model of leadership includes three levels: the leader with their personal characteristics and in their totality, the team with their optimism, confidence, and effectiveness and the context in which it all exists, and the organization, society with its culture, expectations, and constraints. Therefore, it is very important to understand the context in which the leader works and what and how he can influence, as well as what influences are exerted on him. Once appointed, people start to

perform their tasks, to make decisions that can influence the (un)success of the organization. Therefore, on the one hand it is important how people are recruited, what tools are used in the process to put the right people in the right positions (Schmidt 1981) (Hunter 1983), but how managers/leaders perform afterwards depends entirely on their motivation, needs and internal drives.

Appointment of unsuitable leaders

Gallup research shows that in 82% of cases, US companies fail to recruit candidates with the right talent to management positions (Gallup 2015). Again, it shows that only 10% of survey participants have an innate, "God-given" talent to lead teams. 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. 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 training, although it is still preferred by HR professionals (Rekalde 2017), executive coaching is increasingly the choice of senior executives. We can summarize the challenges facing s in Figure 3.



Предизвикателства пред организациите

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

Figure 3 Challenges for organizations, own research

3.2.1.4. Problems of leadership development programmes

As we have already described, leadership in companies is critically weak. It is extremely difficult to find true leaders to take on key leadership positions in organizations and lead their teams. Therefore, the issue of leaders' self-realization is key to the success of organizations.

- 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 point in time, 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).
- O Until now, most leadership development programmes have been based on the now outdated understanding that employers and s are responsible for developing their leaders and that this is done through carefully discussed and planned activities and actions. Some of the standard formal methods of leadership development such as training, personality assessments, university and college programmes, classroom workshops, mentoring, counseling have produced good results, as shown by research findings (A. E. Dachner 2019) (Bell 2017). But very often, as we described above, the

results are unsatisfactory. It is key that effective learning and development of great leaders occurs in the context of their own strategic, economic, intellectual and emotional agenda (C. Rogers 1951) (A. S. Rubens 2018) (Rothstein 2010).

- o In the last few years, new trends have begun to be considered in human resource management theory (A. E. Dachner 2019). Work and the ways in which it is organized multicultural teams, teleworking and working from home, frequent changes of employer, highly dynamic developments in technology, the ever-increasing number of 'freelancers', including the large number of people employed in 'new' professions such as influencers, bloggers, vloggers³ requires an expansion of the traditional concept of professional development within the . Such development is actively sought and implemented by leaders themselves without necessarily expecting intervention from s. It is characterized by benefits for the professional and personal development of the individuals themselves, which is independent of a change of job or even profession.
- O 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. 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 primarily for managers from the headquarters of the respective s and offices in other regions/cities/countries are not proportionately included. This leaves out leaders who would be extremely valuable for all development (Ratanjee 2020).
- 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-time learning. As Abinghaus' 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 rather than formal knowledge transfer.
- O 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) (B. Brown 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, to make mistakes and to learn from their mistakes and thus grow. Such an environment of tolerating mistakes along the path of growth is not only tolerated, it is created in Silicon Valley companies (R. A. 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.

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 s (Gallup 2022) (Deloitte 2020). For example, in his research on the qualities that leaders exhibit, Daniel Golman found that emotional intelligence is twice as important as technical skills and intellect

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³ This can be the basis for future research - how the "new" professions are developed and taught

for all levels in organizations, and is even more important for people in high positions in organizations (Goleman 2019).

3.2.1.5. New trends in leadership development

In order for organizations to respond to the new reality and the new needs of leaders, they need a paradigm shift and a change in the ways in which learning and leadership development are viewed.

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

- 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 devoted \$700 million to upskilling their 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).
- O Shifting the focus for learning and development from the employer to the employees. Until recently, upskilling and learning measures were considered to be a company decision, with lecturers aligned to development plans developed to serve the 's objectives. 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. The responsibility of mastering new skills and retraining to meet the needs of rapidly evolving technology is shifting to the employees themselves (Dachner 2019). With the extraordinary opportunities for individualized learning and development that the internet provides, each person can develop in the ways they want or as part of a development program. This personal development programme can also be supported by the employer, as 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. The benefit is not only for the employing organization at the moment, but also for any subsequent organization that one would enter as part of the team, because one enters with everything that one is: mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually (Bell 2017).
- Wellbeing now with the focus shifted away from the 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 (J. Meister 2022). Similar practices are known to many multinational corporations: Amazon, Deloitte, Google, the Boston Consulting Group, Genetech, Hyatt, Salesforce, Cisco Systems, and the list could go on and on.
- Leaders are actively engaged in their own development and learning. With all the current forms of formal (courses, seminars, employer programmes, NGOs, professional bodies, colleges and universities, academies) and informal (mentors, resource groups, interest groups, coaches, webinars, meetings) learning that are tailored for both face-to-face and online or hybrid participation, leaders have an opportunity that they are increasingly using (A. M. Dachner 2019). They can plan and conduct their individual personal and professional development pathways.

3.2.2. Coaching as a method for leadership development

3.2.2.1. Nature, patterns, types

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. (Kimsey-House 2011) (Joseph 2014) (Cox 2010) (Drake 2008). Ultimately, however, there is no accepted single definition of what coaching is, and there are multiple such (ICF 2019) (Cox 2010) (Noble Manhattan 2007).

In this paper 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 the client can courageously be more of who they truly are."

Coaching is an extremely new for Bulgaria method of working with business owners, entrepreneurs and CEOs. 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.

Coaching is a method of personal development whose benefits can be measured in happiness, satisfaction, experience of fulfillment and self-esteem. The intrinsic need to discover one's true potential is one of the driving forces for realizing the ultimate human - personal and professional - possibilities (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970) (C. Rogers, Freedom to Learn 1959). The process of realizing and realizing human skills and creative potential, viewed from this psychological perspective, makes it possible to take a holistic approach to human existence. Taking as a basis the view of the wholeness 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 at present to what one is born to be.

The basis of the present work is the view of possible self-realization of each person. In his later works Maslow, as well as other authors (C. Rogers, Person Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory 1951) accepted the possibility that each person has the capacity for self-actualization. For Carl Jung this is the process of individuation (Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul 1933).

Due to the rapid growth of the profession, coaching includes different methods, methodologies, tools that depend on the skills, knowledge and preferences of the coaches themselves. Different models are used in practice which, as mentioned, without being mandatory, help to structure the work. Some of them are. (Coaching 2014), SCORE (R. a. Dilts 2000), TOTE (Lazarov 2013).

There are many classifications of types of coaching that provide clarity on this widely used method of personal and professional development. Some of them are: according to the place in organizations (internal, manager-coach and external), according to the purpose (personal, business, for leaders (executive)), according to the techniques used (with elements of Gestalt, NLP, psychodrama, etc.).

3.2.2.2. Reasons why coaching has not been more widespread so far

There are many cases where the coaching interaction is not appropriate and not successful.

Some of the restrictions on the use of coaching:

- O Coaching is still underdeveloped as a profession. It still faces most competition not from other professions, for example psychologists, psychoanalysts, analysts or counselors, 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 been around for millennia, coaching is the product of the desire to develop people and s over the last 25 30 years (Tobias 1996).
- o Coaching is not sufficiently regulated as a profession. It is practiced by people with extremely diverse education, experience, qualifications (International Coaching Federation. 2016). There are no independent bodies to give accreditation.
- o Coaching is one of the most expensive methods to develop people's potential. It has been and is still used to develop key figures in business and non-profit organizations. (Athanasopoulou in press) (Joo 2005).
- O **Distrust of this kind of interaction**. Our culture and mores often do not allow us to seek support for personal development. In the last 5-6 years, there has been a change in attitude, especially as a result of the coaching culture brought to our country by large English-speaking multinational corporations.
- Coaching is the preferred method for leaders compared to internal and external trainings, workshops, seminars because it is highly individualized and tailored to each leader's agenda and needs. On the other hand, standard trainings and seminars remain the preferred method for HR directors (Rekalde 2017).
- o Coaching is administratively applied. Very often in s, the consent of the coachee is not asked for, but it is applied "forcibly", as this intervention is often described (Schermuly 2018) (R. R. Kilburg 2002).
- o Certain types of people who are generally not affected by such interventions. Such are, for example, people high on the narcissism scale.
- Unconsciousness. As Jung notes in his essay "A Psychological Theory of Types" (Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul 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.

3.2.2.3. Nature and specificity of executive coaching

Many authors give their own definition of the essence of executive coaching (coaching for business owners, entrepreneurs and CEOs, which we will abbreviate to EC). In their article, Feldman and Lankau review the concept and nature of EC (D. a. Feldman 2005). They note that in earlier studies executive coaching was considered more as a technique used to correct managers' shortcomings in their task performance. Subsequently, the view has changed and in recent years, EC has been viewed as an approach to help leaders learn and develop towards their best performance (D. a. Feldman 2005) (Dotlich 2003). The definition of 'executive' remains from the period of the original work specifically with CEOs and senior managers and, although it has been used at lower management levels over the years, it persists because the objectives have not changed (Baron 2009).

The definition offered by the author is: "A partnership 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 the client in his or her personal and professional development, thereby improving leadership style, teamwork and organizational performance."

In this paper, the author focuses on the following main features of executive coaching (Figure 4):

- 1. **Individual work for the development and growth of managers**. The process is highly individualized and is based on peer relationship, trust, respect and acceptance (Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957). This method is primarily used to develop strengths and create conditions for personal and professional self-fulfillment (Athanasopoulou 2015). Every leader has their own agenda, challenges, goals and aspirations. This agenda is the focus of the work with the coach. Work is done on personal development as well as leadership skills and al performance (Stokes 2009).
- 2. **System 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 programs for organizations and their leaders. Therefore, it is important that both the leader and the coach are aware of the goals of the organization (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.

- 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 to 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.
- 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).

3.2.2.4. Approaches to executive coaching

Depending on the preparation of the coach, there are different approaches to work. The author discusses some of them based on the ideas of Bruce Peltier (Peltier 2009) and summarizes them in Figure 5.

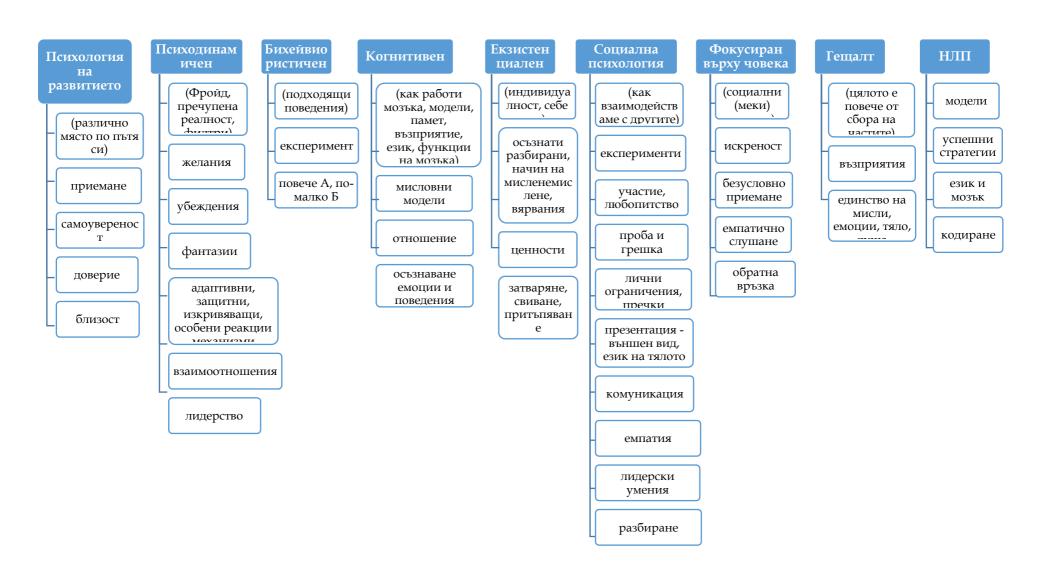


figure 5 Approaches to executive coaching, own interpretation

3.2.2.5. 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. Specific research on the adverse side effects of executive coaching has been examined by Grassman (Grassmann 2016) and are summarised in Figure 6.

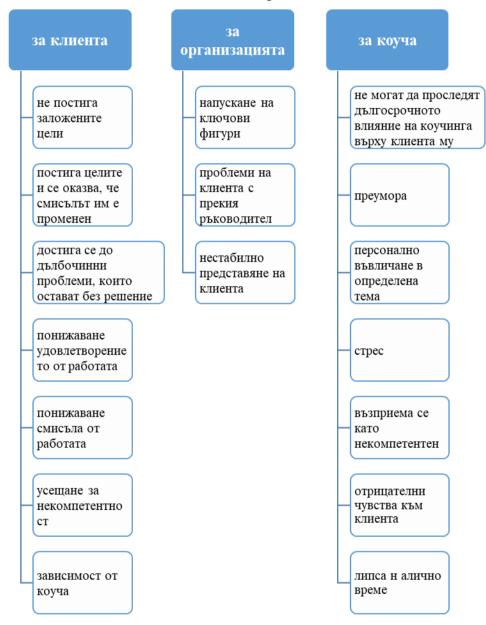


Figure 6 Some adverse side effects from EC, own interpretation

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3.2.3. Expected benefits

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 analyze the outcomes of coaching by exploring some aspects of the benefits, organized into five groups:

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

3.2.3.1. Personal development

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 post-song, unchanging, constant (Maslow, Motivation and Personality 1970) (C. Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957). According to humanistic thought in psychology, every human being is born to be autonomous, self-evaluating, 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 (Kelly 1992) (C. Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory 1995).

The basis of Abraham Maslow's theory of **higher human needs** (Maslow, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature 1967) (Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being 1968) is each person's desire to realize his or her full potential. This theory is defined as a new direction in psychology (Kirk 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. In the present study, the main focus is on the self-actualization⁴ of leaders.

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, more fully human. In this sense, self-realization is more a matter of the degree and frequency of such experiences than that it is only possible for certain people. Self-realization is a process, an action, a continuous change.

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⁴ In English Self-Actualization

We relate this to Michael Merzenick's **theory of neuroplasticity**⁵ (M. M. Merzenich 2014) (M. Merzenich 2018). Neuroplasticity - the ability of the brain to change continuously throughout an individual's lifetime. The mature as well as the immature brain is constantly reorganizing, here and now. In this way, any kind of learning is supported. Interventions can facilitate positive plasticity across the lifespan. (L. Boyd 2015).

One of the best methods of learning **is through experience**⁶ (C. 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 (C. Rogers, The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change 1957).

Synergistically related to experiential learning theory is Jack Maziro's **transformational learning** theory ⁷ (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 meaning**fully (Mezirow, Perspective Transformation 1977). Transformational learning is a **change of so-called meaning perspective**. Adding knowledge, skills and higher competencies to the current meaning perspective does not bring the required result and is even painful. One can then critically rethink one's perceptions and interpretation of reality and take the necessary action (in this theory action is an important element).

According to the theory of **learning with attention**⁸ (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 attentive we view a situation from multiple perspectives and 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)⁹ (M. Knowles, Adult learning processes: Pedagogy and Andragogy 1977). Adult learning (andragogy) differs categorically from child learning (pedagogy). Three different types of needs need to be met: 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.).

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.

Thus, we formulate the first research **hypothesis 1 (X1)**: the coaching process 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 life in general (Gullahorn 1966). In the last year, many articles have appeared that also talk about the

⁵ In English Neuroplasticity

⁶ Experiential Learning

⁷ Transformative learning

⁸ Mindful learning

⁹ In English Andragogy

importance of personal development in the workplace and the positives for professional development (Willis 2022) (team 2022) (Benefits of Personal Development 2022). The problem, even to this day, in the literature on the benefits of coaching is the lag between theory and practice.

3.2.3.2. 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 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. Change, ambiguity and complex relationships are recurring themes in modern career development. In turn, personal success in the evolving 'knowledge economy' requires selfawareness, 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. Considered in the context of Kagan'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 making 10, 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. For the purposes of exploring the ways in which executive coaching improves goal attainment, resolve and well-being in the workplace of leaders (Anthony M. Grant 2009), the authors conducted coaching sessions using a solution-focused cognitivebehavioral framework (A. M. Grant 2003). Executive coaching does support goal attainment, increases determination, reduces depressive states and stress, and increases well-being. The authors conclude that "given how many organizational change initiatives are problematic and that failures to change can be costly in both business and human terms, organizations should "consider using individual coaching as a support mechanism". This builds resilience at an al, and an 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 coaching positively affects the career development of the leader.

3.2.3.3. Effective management

The challenge in executive coaching is to help leaders better develop their strengths and this in turn helps them better contribute to their career development and their organization (Drucker 1999). There is a need for coached leaders 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 , i.e. their personal and their professional development go together (Parker 2004). Research has shown that the more developed the economy, the more prevalent is the individual approach to career management rather than the al (Segers 2012). Organizations remain "supportive and developmental" (Baruch 2006) and actively engaged in managing the careers of their leaders (Segers 2012). The same research shows that the more innovative and with strategies for development and success the , the more often coaching is used. The more focused on cost

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¹⁰ In English meaning-making

reduction, the less often coaching and other leadership development methods 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 (D. Rohlander 1999). It is common for organizations' processes to be hampered by lack of good communication. In many organizations, leaders fear open and authentic relationships (B. Brown 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 a coaching intervention positively influences career development.

3.2.3.4. Teamwork

In 2020, Gallup urges, "Turn your company into a development machine for your people." (Robison 2020).

Work that used to be done individually, today with the unprecedented advancement of technology and dynamic work environment, is usually done by teams to get projects done 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 explored: team communication, team problem solving, performance and effectiveness, creativity, and 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. Often poor team relationships, regardless of reward, is the cause of departures, dismissals, turnover, ineffectiveness. Of course, sometimes it takes a leader to be able to let an employee go in time to keep the team (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). 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 build 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). Working in a team where trust and understanding reigns brings happiness, openness and confidence that the team can get through anything, faith and caring(Conant 2016).

Very often, both in practice and in the literature, the financial dimensions of coaching are emphasized, e.g. return on capital. Such a focus on financial metrics can narrow the perspective and coaches on the one hand and organizations on the other may not fully realize the true impact of coaching (A. M. Grant 2012). It is very important to consider results in the context of other factors, for example, employee engagement and well-being. And these characteristics are indirectly extremely important for the success of organizations, as we have already commented (Gallup 2022) (Gallup 2021). 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 are 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, while 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 to hone in on those areas, to 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 proposition shows us an opportunity to explore the impact of effective leadership on teamwork.

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

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). Engaged employees proactively change their work environment to stay engaged (A. Bakker 2011). Although not much research exists on the impact of coaching on teamwork. Research by (Aldrin 2019) shows a very strong and significant correlation between teamwork before and after a coaching intervention. Coaching is used as a method of development and teamwork in different types of teams: sports (Van Puyenbroeck 2017), medical (Petty 2019) (Welp 2018), project-based (Mariam 2020), traditional and virtual organizations (Żukowska 2010). This theoretical base provides us with a basis to explore the impact of leaders' personal development on teamwork.

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

3.2.3.5. 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. Too often leaders reach exhaustion and chronic stress, burnout and disease (Mate 2003). Therefore it is vital for them to delegate. Seen from the employees' perspective, 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 (Vries 2011). This is also strongly related to empowerment - giving employees a voice at different levels in the. 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 (D. Rohlander 1999). According to Gallup's surveys of the most successful managers, regardless of the type of organization and industry in which they operate, they have one skill in common, and that is recognizing and leveraging the talents and strengths of their people (Davenport 2018). 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. Hence, within the literature, the relationship between team communication and performance is often appreciated (Marlow 2017). We know that non-verbal communication influences perceivers as a source of motivation, focus, 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 (Kacperek 1997). If the limitations of digitally mediated communication are not addressed, the performance of teams in culturally diverse settings is at risk (Kenon 2019).

Effective management is taken for granted in the promotion of employees and line managers in the organization's hierarchy. A case study of a 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 upon appointment and for the first 2-3 months (if at all) are woefully inadequate for manager success. 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. In this regard, the goal setting process is seen as part of leadership development programmes. Research findings on the relationship between goal setting, clarity, commitment and organizational performance (Medlin 2009) (Decker 2012) show 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 suggests that the "black box "between them may be employee well-being specifically in relation to job engagement (K. Breevaart 2015) (A. a. 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. P. Seligman 2002). Leaders need to ensure that the people in their teams are coached and mentored to align with the organizations values (Weiner 2017).

Thus, we formulate research **hypothesis 5** (**X5**): effective management as a result of personal development after coaching intervention positively affects 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 (Schneider 2003). The role of the leader is again found to be significant not only for the team climate but also for the overall performance of the organization. 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 ensure 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 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 coaching positively affects organizational performance.

Competent leaders influence their followers and s (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). Here it is good to consider the research on what the relationship of various factors with subjective well-being (Diener 1995). Scholars have shown that it is not the expected and frequently 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 that are more strongly related to subjective well-being.

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, trust for 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 (K. B. Matzler 2015) (K. B. Matzler 2015) (Galante 2017) (Hill 1977). 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 coaching positively influences effective

3.3. Chapter Two: 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 'outcomes' should be or how they should be measured remain unclear and inconsistent (Haan 2012), there have been 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 instrument.

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', 'al performance'.

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.

3.3.1. 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.

3.3.1.1. 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 answers from leaders who have been coached
- 2. Drawing 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 and the list was updated.
- 5.As a result of the preliminary work described in 3. and 4. a final list of common areas of influence from the coaching reported by the interviewees and the cases analysed was produced.
- 6. The set of 13 characteristics of self-actualizing people from Maslow's theory was compared with the list of results after the analysis of 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. Therefore, the questionnaire was designed to explore different aspects of possible personal and professional fulfilment benefits.

3.3.1.2. Content of the questionnaire

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 executive coaching. Those who answer "Yes" continue with the following questions. At the beginning of the questionnaire, questions 2 and 3 explore attitudes towards executive coaching. Question 4 explores attitudes to learning and development. Question 5, with 50 subquestions, explores different aspects of benefits in working towards personal and professional development based on the coaching method in 5 groups:

- o **Personal development**. 15 questions are included in this group.
- o **Teamwork**. 9 questions are included.
- o **Effective management**. 9 questions are included.
- o Career Development. 8 questions are included.
- Organizational performance. 9 questions are included.

At the end of the questionnaire, for questions 6 to 10, respondents revealed demographic information about themselves.

Google Forms was used as the platform for the questionnaire. IBM SPSS and JASP programs were used for data processing.

3.3.2. Analysis of results

3.3.2.1. Analysis of results from univariate distributions

92% of respondents were aged 55 or younger. The largest number of respondents work in organizations with more than 250 people (29%) and in microbusinesses with 1-9 people (25%). The largest proportion of respondents work in services (52%) and trade (14%). At the bottom of the ranking are those working in the fields of public administration, NGOs and healthcare (2.4% each).

90% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that there is value in using coaching to develop the potential of people in s. With nearly 86% wanting to be coached in the future.

For 51% of participants, being coached was their own decision. For another part, the supervisor (27%) or the owner (15%) make this decision.

3.3.2.2. Analysis of the results of bivariate distributions

63.3% of the respondents who used coaching were people between 46 and 55 years of age, employed in small organizations between 10 and 49 people. 63% of respondents in organizations between 10 and 49 people were between 46 and 55 years of age, and 45% of those in freelance organizations were under 35 years of age. In large organizations of more than 50 people, 70% of respondents were under the age of 45. Regardless of the size of the organization, the highest percentage of respondents are in the service industry. The highest proportion of respondents who said they would use coaching in the future were in the service, health and construction sectors.

3.3.2.3. Analysis of factor analysis results

Based on the literature review and the author's practical experience, we hypothesized the benefits of using executive coaching for the professional and personal development of leaders in five areas (factors): personal development, effective management, teamwork, career development, and organizational performance. We used factor analysis to confirm or reject this hypothesis. We performed the analysis using the SPSS program. Using the principal components analysis (PCA) method for factor extraction, we determined how many latent factors described the sample. The requirements for this type of analysis (randomness of data, 169 responses to the questionnaire, mutually correlated variables, KMO test values above 0.9, significance of Bartlett's Test for sphericity, non-zero determinant) were met in this study.

After applying Varimax rotation, 49 characteristics were distributed to five factors, which explained 74.21% of the total variance of the data (> 50%), and the first factor did not account for more than 50% of the total variance (22.81%), indicating that there was no danger of bias of the sample estimates (common method bias) (Jordan & Troth, 2020). We continued rotating until 41 characterizations remained with good distributions across factor groups and with factor weights above 0.55 (R. A. Peterson 2000).

As a result of the factor analysis, 5 factors emerged (Table 1). The 41 remaining characteristics explained 76.36% of the total sample variance. The high values of Cronbach's alphas (above 0.9 for all five groups of characteristics) confirm their reliability. Eigenvalues of the five factors were > 1.

The final distribution of characteristics across the factors is as follows: personal development (PD) with 16 characteristics, teamwork (TE) with 12, career development (CD) with 6, effective management (EM) with 4, and organizational performance (OP) with 4.

Table 1 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.

The results of the factor analysis are shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Model of coaching benefits for leaders, own research

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

3.3.2.4. Analysis of structural modeling results

In further analysis, we use the five identified factors to determine whether there are any relationships and interactions between them. For this purpose, we apply the statistical method of structural modeling. We put the eight hypotheses described above to the test.

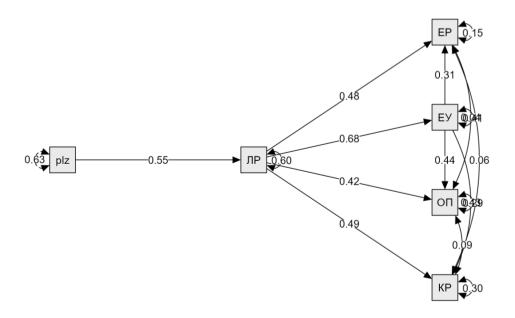
We examine the relationships between a directly measured characteristic, Benefit of Coaching (measured by question 4 with the statement, "I benefit from coaching leadership support"), and five factors reflecting benefits of coaching, namely Personal Development, Teamwork, Effective Management, Career 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...".

For modeling purposes in JASP, we translate the relationships we expect into the equations shown in Table 2 using the lavaan syntax (Rosseel 2012). We use the Maximum Likelihood function to reconcile the model.

Table 2 Structural modeling 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 modeling and obtain the model visually represented by the path graph (Figure 1).



Graphic 1 Structural modeling results, own study

Most statistical methods require only one statistical indicator to determine the significance of analyses. In structural modeling, 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). There is a need to provide a good theoretical basis for determining the proposed model, a process of identifying each latent factor. In the present work, this is the previously conducted and validated factor analysis.

A good value of the χ^2 /df ratio in the considered model was obtained to be 4.73 (recommended value <5) (Hooper 2008)(Table 3). In our model P<.001 (recommended value P>.001) and this indicates that the model can be improved (Table 3). In the model studied, the comparative consistency index was 0.98, indicating excellent consistency (recommended value >0.95) (Table 4). The goodness of fit criterion between the hypothesized model and the observed covariance matrix (GFI) was 0.99 (>0.9), indicating very good agreement (Table 5). The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) criterion ¹¹ in this case is 0.1 and indicates average model agreement with reference values for average agreement between 0.08 and 0.1 (Schermelleh-Engel 2003) (Table 5). The standardized 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 5). The variance explained by the respective factors can be seen in Table 6. The factor loadings and the relationships between them are described in Table 7. All relationships are statistically significant.

Table 3 Model consistency results with empirical data, own study

				Baseline test		Diffe	erence	test	
	AIC	BIC	n	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 4	Results	for model	consistency	v indices	, own study
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Index	Value
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.980
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.975

Table 5 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

¹¹ In English Root mean square error of approximation

.

Metric	Value
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.987
McDonald fit index (MFI)	0.957

Table 6 Result for R square, own study

	\mathbb{R}^2
CR	0.656
OP	0.625
EW	0.469
ER	0.733
LR	0.239

Table 7 Results for regression coefficients, own study

95% Confidence Interval

Predicto r	Outcom e	Estimat e	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
polza	LR	0.548	0.076	7.248	<.00 1	0.400	0.696
LR	ER	0.481	0.047	10.288	<.00 1	0.389	0.572
EW	ER	0.310	0.047	6.578	<.00	0.217	0.402
LR	CR	0.488	0.065	7.513	<.00 1	0.361	0.616
EW	CR	0.434	0.066	6.617	<.00	0.305	0.562
LR	EW	0.679	0.056	12.153	<.00	0.570	0.789
	OP	0.419	0.064	6.491	<.00	0.292	0.545
EW	OP	0.439	0.065	6.757	<.00	0.311	0.566

From the above analysis of the structural modeling results and the model consistency tests conducted, it can be seen that the eight research hypotheses were confirmed.

3.3.3. Conclusions

To summarize the analysis so far, we can say that based on the literature review and the author's practical experience, the benefits of using EC for the professional and personal development of leaders were hypothesized in five areas (factors): personal development, effective management, teamwork, career development, and organizational performance. It was set out to explore the relationships between them. A tool to analyze the benefits of EC was created and successfully piloted. Using factor analysis, a distribution of characteristics was created to describe the above five factors. Most of the attributes were distributed in a predictable way at the beginning, but there were a few unexpected results. For example, of the likely characteristics of al 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 (B. a. Medlin 2009) (A. Decker 2012) (D. K. Kaitelidou 2012) the characteristic 'clarity' has been dropped, and from those likely for effective management (ICF 2009) (J. Weiner 2017) open sharing and collaboration were dropped. These are interesting topics for future research.

Building on the available literature and the author's professional practice, a conceptual model was constructed, a complex system of relationships and dependencies between the five factors described above, put forward as hypotheses. Using structural modeling, the conceptual model was tested and, based on various criteria and indices, was checked for consistency. The model was found to be plausible. Since a sound theoretical basis and process was followed to identify each latent factor (the factor analysis already described), it can be argued with a high degree of confidence that the model is "correct" (Schermelleh-Engel 2003). In this way, confirmation of all relationships and relationships put forward as hypotheses was obtained. They are as follows: the process of executive coaching positively influences the growth of the leader's personal development; 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 should be seen in the context of the following organics.

3.3.4. 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 exploring 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 out¹², 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. The representativeness of the sample 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.
- 7. Due to the format of the study, it is not possible to examine the short and long term effects of EC.

3.3.5. Scientifically theoretical and scientifically applicable contributions of the dissertation

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 theoretical contributions are as follows:

- O 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.
- o For the first time, a conceptual link is drawn between the personal and professional benefits of coaching for leaders' self-realization.
- o An instrument (questionnaire) for quantifying the benefits of EC for the personal and professional self-fulfillment of leaders was created and tested.

¹² 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 **Invalid source assigned.**.

o Positive links between personal self-efficacy 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.

4. Publications of the author related to the dissertation

- 1. Stefanova, Z. (2022) Internal compass: a tool for measuring the benefits of coaching for leaders, *Yearbook of Sofia University Faculty of Economics*, Vol. 22
- 2. Stefanova, Z. (2022) In the eye of the storm there is calm: tap into your inner resources (in the context of covid-19 pandemic), *Cambridge Scholars Publishing*
- 3. Stefanova, Z. (2020), "Executive Coaching in the Practice of Professional Self-Realization of Leaders", Yearbook Volume XLI, Burgas Free University, XXI Conference on Student Scientific Creativity

5. Author's reports related to the dissertation

- 1. "In the Eye of the Storm There is Calm", The 22nd Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" Annual Conference, "Environmental, social and governance challenges for recovery and resilience", 2021
- 2. "Executive Coaching: From Self Actualization to Learning Organizations", Just and SMART Transitions: New Deals, Markets and Governance, Jubilee Conference on the occasion of 30 years of re-establishment of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2020
- 3. Paper on "Executive Coaching in Practice for Professional Self-Realization of Leaders", Burgas Free University, XXI Conference for Student Scientific Creativity, 2020.
- 4. Executive Coaching: From Self-Sabotage to Self-Actualization, International Multidisciplinary Conference "Transformations and Challenges in the Global World", Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, 2020
- 5. Report on "Executive Coaching: a Method for Self-Actualization", PhD Seminar Faculty of Economics, 2020

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