

REVIEW

of the dissertation "BENEFITS OF EXECUTIVE COACHING FOR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT"

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for awarding the educational and scientific degree DOCTOR
in professional direction 3.7 Administration and management

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The review is prepared by Assoc. Prof. PhD Iya Todorova Petkova based on the Order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" RD 38-123/13.03.2023.

Data on the doctoral student: Zornitsa Stefanova was enrolled as a doctoral student in an independent form of study in the "Business Administration" department of the Faculty of Economics at the "Sveti Kliment Ohridski" SU in February 2020. She successfully passed the exams from her individual plan. There is no data on violations committed during the realization of the doctoral studies. Mrs. Stefanova is an NLP master, has significant professional expertise in the field of company training, professional development and executive coaching.

Description of the dissertation text. The presented dissertation has a volume of 215 pages. It is structured in the following separate parts: Introduction (pp. 8-13); I chapter " Executive coaching: basic theories and concepts" (p. 14-129), chapter II "Research methodology. Analysis of the results" (p. 130-187) and Conclusion (p. 188-191). The volume of work also includes two appendices in a volume of 9 pages - Appendix 1 "Questionnaire for measuring the benefits of executive coaching" and Appendix 2 "Employment agreement". The text is illustrated with 33 figures, 23 tables and 3 graphs. The bibliography includes 315 sources, of which 12 are in Cyrillic and 303 are in Latin. The purpose of the dissertation is to investigate to what extent executive coaching is useful for developing the personal potential of leaders and how personal development affects effective management, career development , teamwork and organizational performance.

The thesis defended in the dissertation is that executive coaching affects the personal growth of coachees, and personal development affects effective management, career development, teamwork and organizational performance.

In the introduction, the dissertation presents the motivation for developing the topic and justifies its relevance in the context of the challenges and accelerated dynamics of modern business society.

The purpose and tasks resulting from it are presented, as well as the research thesis, the object and the subject of the dissertation work. The choice of methods and research tools is justified. The limitations of the study are described, the structure of the text is presented in a synthesized form.

The first chapter " Executive Coaching: Basic Theories and Concepts " is a volume of 116 pages. It is devoted to a literature review. In the first part of the theoretical overview, various aspects of the challenges of developing leadership skills in modern organizations are presented. The second part of the theoretical overview describes in detail coaching as an essence and practice, various types of coaching are discussed, with an emphasis on executive coaching - essence, specifics and approaches. The third meaning part derives expected benefits of executive coaching, namely personal development, career development, effective management, teamwork and organizational performance. Based on the overview, eight research hypotheses were derived and a research model was generated.

The second chapter, entitled "Research Methodology. Analysis of the results", is a volume of 58 pages. It describes in detail the methodology for the empirical research, with which Zornitsa Stefanova shows a good knowledge of both the tools for conducting quantitative research and the statistical apparatus for handling data. Following the phases of the actual research, the dissertation has described the path of preparation for conducting the statistical survey, the test phase and the actual conduct. The arguments with which the dissertation chooses the factors, the target groups, conducts the survey, rejects the examination of the results of the so-called are presented in good faith. control group and analyze the information. Data analysis was carried out using one-dimensional and two-dimensional distributions, factor analysis, structural modeling was done to examine the relationships between factors.

The analysis is based on data obtained from 169 respondents – all of whom went through a “coach” process. The interrelationships between the obtained results have been traced in detail and

conclusions have been formulated that provide grounds for the further acceptance or rejection of the scientific hypotheses.

From the obtained results, the dissertation confirms the eight hypotheses raised, namely: 1) The coaching process has a positive effect on the growth of the leader's personality (personal development); 2) Personal development resulting from the use of coaching positively affects the career development of the leader; 3) Effective management, as a result of personal development after coaching intervention, positively affects career development; 4) Effective management, as a result of personal development after coaching intervention, positively affects teamwork; 5) Effective management, as a result of personal development after coaching intervention, positively affects organizational performance; 6) Personal development resulting from the use of coaching positively affects organizational performance; 7) Personal development resulting from the use of coaching positively influences teamwork and 8) Personal development resulting from the use of coaching positively influences effective management.

The conclusion presents in a synthesized form the main highlights of the theoretical analysis and offers conclusions and summaries of the theoretical-practical research

In *the appendices* to the dissertation text, the research instrument and a sample contract, which is concluded between a specialist coach and a client, are presented.

Evaluation of the dissertation. My overall assessment of the dissertation work is positive. The arguments for this assessment are:

- The problem-thematic field of the dissertation work is particularly relevant and gives a wide field for development, both from a theoretical and a practical point of view;
- Based on an in-depth literature review, an own conceptual model was constructed to assess the importance of personal development after a coaching intervention, as a factor that influences career development, teamwork, organizational performance and effective management;
- The model was successfully tested on data from respondents through an author's questionnaire. The analysis of the research results has both a synthesizing and building character;
- The chosen methods for processing the empirical information correspond to the research model, enabling a correct analysis and a reasoned answer to the research questions and the verification of the hypotheses;

- The dissertation student has presented an analysis of the results, both from a statistical and scientifically reasoned point of view, and from a practical-applied point of view - with a detailed description of the reasons for the obtained data. This is a logical consequence, both of the accumulated professional experience in the field on the part of the dissertation student, and of the demonstrated skills for analyzing phenomena for which an interdisciplinary approach is applied;
- The developed author's model for creating and testing a tool for analyzing the benefits of executive coaching deserves high praise;
- The obtained results contribute to the enrichment of management approaches related to personal and career development;
- Throughout the text, the strong dedication of the dissertation student to the work of preparing the scientific text clearly stands out.

Questions, criticisms, suggestions . Mrs. Stefanova has presented a scientific text in which a strong interest in the issue under consideration is clearly outlined. With a view to working on further developments in this scientific field, I consider it useful for Zornitsa to report some points with potential for improvement:

- After the extensive theoretical overview, taking into account the recognizable professional expertise in the field of executive coaching, I believe that it would be good for Ms. Stefanova to offer a critical evaluation and comment on the presented conceptual models;
- The obtained data (and the demonstrated opportunities for the dissertation's analysis) give reason to expect a more extended discussion and comments;
- The scientific sources used can be enriched with research in the field of coaching and personal development by Bulgarian researchers;
- In places, re-checking the accuracy of the statement is required.

Contributions . I accept the contributions requested by the dissertation student. The mentioned contributions contain both theoretical-applied and practical-applied aspects.

The abstract is developed according to the requirements and reflects the main points of the dissertation work.

I have reason to be confident that the presented text is entirely the result of the author's personal efforts.

We don't have any joint publications.

Three publications related to the issues of the dissertation are presented.

Personal impressions. I know Ms. Zornitsa Stefanova as a doctoral student at the Department of Business Administration. I know her work academically and I can say with conviction that Zornitsa is a person you can rely on, highly responsible and goal-oriented.

In view of the foregoing and bearing in mind the following:

- It is clear from the submitted documents that the required procedure has been followed;
- The dissertation contains protected scientific and scientific-applied results; the candidate demonstrates thorough training and capacity for independent research;
- The requirements for the awarding of the scientific and educational degree DOCTOR by ZRASRB, the Regulations for the implementation of ZRASRB, the Regulations of the SU on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions have been met.

I propose that Zornitsa Stefanova be awarded the educational and scientific degree DOCTOR in professional direction 3.7 Administration and management.

Sofia, April 30, 2023

Reviewer:

(Assoc. Dr. Iya Petkova)