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Managers as coaches: how to assess these skills in organizational environments



Coaching, in organizational environments, is considered to be a process of dialogue through which the coach generates conditions that favour labour relationships, creativity, responsibility and efficiency. This study, carried out by Andreea Munteanu, PhD Student at UAB in collaboration with Lucia Ratiu, lecturer at Babes-Bolyai University, analyses a method of assessing the managers' coaching skills in different companies, and their results from two different perspectives (managers and employees). Their conclusion has been that a cross-cultural adaptation of the instrument could work for different populations even though we have to take into consideration different aspects regarding cross-cultural adaptation.

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In organizational environments, coaching is recognized more and more as a process of accelerating development and growth.

In particular, coaching receives increased attention due to the benefits that it can bring for the

performance of the employees when practiced by managers. The outcomes are considerable in improving relationships with employees at the workplace, creativity and innovation, communication processes affecting organizational efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

In organizations, coaching can be defined as a pro-active process, a one-on-one interaction that facilitates the development of the employee's potential involving support, feedback, partnership and specific tools.

In this respect, in the field of organizational development, a special interest emerges for the reconfiguration of the managerial role, from command and control to a new style of management based on coaching. A coaching style means focusing on "...equipping people with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities they need to develop themselves and become more effective" (Peterson and Hicks, 1996).

Given the fact that organizations started to acknowledge that managing is not enough to achieve high performance, they started to take interest in preparing their managers for the additional role of a coach. Programs have been developed to enhance the coaching skills of the managers, but few progresses were made in validating tools and instruments for assessing the real needs of the managers in their organizational environment.

The study "Manager as coach: Cross-Cultural Adaptation of an Instrument Assessing Managers' Coaching Skills" analyzes a method of assessing the coaching skills of 113 managers from 2 different companies from Romania, using a self-rating and subordinate rating scale, meant to offer two different perspectives regarding the coaching skills of the managers. Based on an instrument validated by McLean et al. (2005) and Park et al. (2008) in an English speaking country used to assess the coaching behavior of a manager, the authors of this study (Andreea Munteanu, PhD student at UAB in collaboration with Lucia Ratiu, lecturer at Babes-Bolyai University) focused on adapting the scale to a new target group, a Romanian sample, testing the equivalence of the managers' coaching skills model across the different groups which were assessed: managers and employees. The theoretical framework of the manager coaching skills model encompassed four dimensions: openly communicating with others, taking a team approach to tasks, valuing people over task, and accepting the ambiguous nature of the working environment, describing the capabilities of the manager as a coach.

The results of the study showed good reliability and factorial structure of the scale in the two versions in which it was tested, self-rating and subordinate rating, suggesting that a cross-cultural adaptation of the instrument could work for different populations. However, the study outlines that when working cross-culturally we have to take into consideration the prevalence of coaching and the different understanding of coaching as a practice, in different countries.

The present study contributes by offering a statistical procedure of validating the managers' coaching skills model, which could be used in the future in the translation and adaptation of the scales to other different cultures.

Andreea Munteanu

Under the supervision of Rosa Maria Raich and Marisol Mora

Department of Clinical Psychology and Health

Faculty of Psychology
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
andreea@coaching4eu.eu

References

Munteanu, A. & Ratiu, L. (2018). **The manager as Coach: Cross-Cultural Adaptation of an Instrument Assessing Managers' Coaching Skills**. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 36:303. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-015-0221-z>.

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