

Proposal of a Leadership Competency Model

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Research problem and theoretical foundation

Research suggests that fewer dimensions be used during assessment centers (ACs) to lessen the cognitive load on assessors (Thornton, Rupp, Hoffman, 2015), but which competencies to use in a leader AC? (We understand competencies and behavioural dimensions in a similar way.) Our proposal is to use one simple model which differentiate managers from leaders.

Leadership has been a focus of research for dozens of years. In the literature about the subject one may find unsuccessful attempts to define leaders' attributes (Lord et al., 1986; Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991), concepts based on leaders' behaviors (Likert, 1961; Blake & Mouton, 1964) or situations (Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; Vroom & Yetton, 1973; House, 1971; House, 1996; Vroom & Jago, 2007). However, they focus on the skills of leaders (competencies), their leadership style or situation, instead of the barriers within which a leader and its organization operate and the ways the barriers are overcome. According to Koźmiński (2013), a battle with own and organizational barriers makes the power of leadership.

This proposal of a leadership competency model draws from the Bounded Leadership Theory (BLT) developed by Koźmiński (2013). The theory was developed on the grounds of in-depth interviews with 29 leading representatives from the world of politics, business, culture, religion, sport and local authorities. Among others they included two Presidents of Poland, one Prime Minister, a Cardinal of the Catholic Church, CEOs of important Polish institutions, foundations, banks and others. Based on this research Koźmiński (2013) has identified specific leadership competencies – i.e. anticipatory, visionary, value-creating, mobilizing and self-reflective. We have confirmed this assumption in our quantitative research (Koźmiński, Baczyńska, & Korzyński in press).

The analysis of competencies important from the perspective of management and a review of competency models led me to the conclusion that leadership competencies identified by Koźmiński (2013) can be treated as 'pure' leadership competencies - they do not overlap with the competencies of focusing on operational management which belongs more to the managerial role.

Research Methodology

In order to verify the hypotheses formulated in this research, three original questionnaires were prepared and validated. The questionnaires, prepared in accordance with literature recommendations (see: Yukl, 2013), were developed on the basis of observable behaviours, which are good indicators of competencies (Filipowicz, 2004). These behavioural dimensions could directly be used as observable dimensions in AC Methods. The first questionnaire measured leadership competencies, the second questionnaire measured the ability to overcome constraints and the third questionnaire measured leadership influence. These questionnaires have Cronbach-Alpha's between 0.7 and 0.9.

An on-line survey on a selected sample of managers was conducted using the 360 Degree Feedback method. A total of 199 data sets were collected, which means that our research was subsequently based on a sample of 199 self-assessments (by managers) and 796 assessments by other people, which add up to 995 respondents in total. The sample of managers consisted of MBA students, who held positions such as CEO, Director, Project Manager, and Line Manager.

Research Results

It was assumed that the data would form a single model – dimensions which could be used in AC Methods. Indicators confirm that data from our research fits the model as initially expected.

In addition, these results confirm Koźmiński's assumptions (2013) that the role of a leader should be perceived through *analysing and predicting future events* (anticipation), *creating a vision* (visionary), *showing what is important* for the organization, the team, or identifying key values (value-creating), *mobilizing others* to hard work (mobilization) and *drawing conclusions* from past experiences (self-reflection).

Results and conclusions shed new light on actions undertaken by leaders within organizations. The perception of a leader's role has a systematizing impact on the chaotic field of competency models and leadership behaviours.

Implication for ACs

The model identified in the study opens up a new perspective in the process of designing leader selection and development processes. The model can serve as a basis for a more conscious identification of competencies for groups of future leaders.



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Anna is an expert in Human Resource Management. As a practitioner, Anna has 18 years' experience in work and cooperation with varied companies. She has worked in managerial roles in ORANGE, T.P. S. A. and, as Senior Consultant, conducted consultancy projects in Personnel Management for MAKRO, PKO BP, ABB, TP S.A, Orange, PZU S.A., SONY Poland, NASK, Idea 25, Getin Noble Bank, Skoda, ROCHE, Rzeczpospolita and many others.

Anna is also an expert in the diagnosis of managerial competencies and designs and carries out assessment and development center and career path processes. She is an author of competency tests and varied diagnostic tools for business.

Last publications:

1. Baczyńska, A. K., Rowinski T. (2015) A trait profile of top and middle managers. *Frontiers in Organizational Psychology* 6:1694. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01694.; <http://journal.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01694/full>
2. Baczyńska, A. K., (2015) Analytical, Practical and Emotional Intelligence and Line Manager Competencies. *Management and Business Administration. Central Europe*; 23(4):34-54
3. Baczyńska, A.K., Rowiński T., Cybis N. (2016) Proposed core competencies and empirical validation procedure in competency modeling: confirmation and classification. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 08 March 2016; <http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00273>
4. Baczynska A, Thornton G. C. (2017) Relationships of analytical, practical, and emotional intelligence with behavioral dimensions of performance of top managers. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*. 25:171–182. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijsa.1217>
5. Baczynska A., Korzyński P, (2017) Leadership competencies. *Management and Business Administration. Central Europe*; 25(2):6-22