

THE ASSESSMENT OF COACHING BY TRADE MANAGERS

Birknerová Z., Benková E.*

Abstract: Coaching is one of the tools for the development of trade managers and the discovery of their hidden potential. It is a tool for seeking satisfaction, motivation, and effectiveness. The paper aims to identify the attributes of coaching assessment by trade managers. Its partial aim is to verify a new AC-BEC methodology – the assessment of coaching from the point of view of behaviour, emotions, and cognitions, three factors that were extracted in the research. The given methodology was created for the purpose of extending the range of possibilities for identifying the factors of coaching assessment by trade managers. The results show that managers operating in trade are willing to try new things, they want to develop personally and be more effective and in coaching, it is necessary to monitor and evaluate all attributes individually. It is not possible to look at this process as a whole.

Key words: coaching, AC-BEC methodology, emotions, behaviour, cognitions

DOI: 10.17512/pjms.2020.22.1.05

Article history:

Received July 4, 2020; Revised August 11, 2020; Accepted October 19, 2020

Introduction

We live in the times that require extra standard work performance from us, we need to know to cope with changes (Horváthová, 2011), adapt to scientific progress, communicate and spend time effectively and to harmonize our work and privacy. Trade management is not an exception, with the demands on individuals constantly increasing. High responsibility, flexibility, communication skills, and stress resistance are expected from managers. Communication skills are principal for all managers and they can be considered to be essential managerial skills (Štefko et al., 2015), since obtaining relevant information belongs to the everyday managers' practice. The development of soft skills is needed to achieve a competitive advantage (Crosbie, 2005; Hunt and Baruch, 2003) and organisations should act entrepreneurially (Kot, Meyer and Broniszewska 2016). Continuous development of knowledge and skills is inevitable to for the efficient performance at a workplace (Tóth, Juhász and Kálmán, 2020). In this context, the role of trade management is to create such working conditions for all that will help them to meet the demands placed on them.

* **Zuzana Birknerová**, The University of Prešov in Prešov, Assoc. Prof. PaedDr., PhD, MBA, **Eva Benková**, The University of Prešov in Prešov, Mgr., PhD.

✉ corresponding author: eva.benkova@unipo.sk

✉ zuzana.birknerova@unipo.sk

One way to create appropriate working environment is to use coaching as a tool for the development and personal growth considering the individual characteristics and needs of an individual. A person-centred approach is essential professional care, as in therapy and coaching, counselling, teaching and many other helping professions (Stará and Peterson, 2017). Coaching is based on the fact that every healthy person has the potential to exceed his/her current performance. The advantage of coaching is not only the effective advancement and achievement of goals but also a change in the way of thinking about routine standards. Through coaching, people become more self-reliant, more self-confident, and more creative in dealing with various issues, situations, and problems. Coaching is a tool that enables to change and influence what we really can change and to make changes really happen, we have to start by ourselves.

Literature review on Coaching

One of the main ways to help people exploit their potential is the development of human capital using coaching. Greene and Grant (2003) claim that coaching improves communication among employees, improves performance and decreases fluctuation. Therefore, it is appropriate for managers to know how to coach since coaching brings advantages to employees leading to the advantages for the whole organization. The best trade managers are those who share their experience. Managers must forget their supervision and instead of it, by asking open questions and encouraging the members of their teams, they should help the members to overcome their common experiences (Thorne and Pellant, 2007; Grobler and De Bruyn, 2018; Maciejewski et al., 2019; Ismail et al., 2020). When managers ask questions, they listen and learn and they get an answer to the question of what is necessary to change in order to achieve success. Successful people become great leaders when they learn to shift their attention from themselves to others (Goldsmith, et al., 2012).

Gallwey (2001) defines coaching as a tool for releasing a potential allowing the persons being coached to maximize their performance. This performance is a result of two factors: potential and interferences that prevent the full use of this potential. Gallwey (2004) claims that coaching itself does not teach us anything, it rather helps how to learn and release a potential of people and thereby increases their performance. Haberleitner et al. (2009) report that coaching means developing the potential of all workers according to their current level of development with a goal to optimize their performance while considering their objectives, interests, and needs. Coaching brings a specific approach to engaging a weaker worker or helping someone who has not enough experience to do the job well. A coach must distinguish between full utilization and overload. Full work utilization brings benefits. Failure is often the only way to success. It involves unblocking potential, developing, and formulating tasks and goals, exchanging mutual expectations, and providing reciprocal feedback. Suchý and Náhlovský (2007) add that coaching can

release not only our existing potential but also develop it. Coaching brings results based on a supportive relationship between a coach and the coached one and the style of communication used by the coach. The coached persons acquire facts not from the coach but themselves inside (Whitmore, 2009). Abbott et al. (2010) claim that attention must be paid to selecting the area that coaching will include in creating unique goals, strategies, and possible steps.

Coaching is a process enabling people to find and implement solutions that are the most suitable for themselves personally. This is done through a dialogue that helps the coached persons to see new perspectives, to achieve greater clarity in their ideas, emotions, deeds, situations, and the people around them (Wilson, 2007). Downey (2003) defines coaching as art, practical inspiration, energization, facilitation, performance, learning, and development.

The research project presented in this paper is based on theoretical knowledge (Abbott et al., 2010; Downey, 2003; Gallwey, 2001; Whitmore, 2009; Wilson, 2007).

Methodology – the research of identifying coaching attributes

The goal of the paper is to identify the attributes of coaching assessment by trade managers. Its partial aim is to verify a new AC-BEC methodology – the assessment of coaching from the point of view of behaviour, emotions, and cognitions. This methodology was created and verified with the purpose to extend the range of possibilities for identifying the factors of coaching assessment by the managers operating in trade.

The methodology consists of 23 statements related to the assessment of coaching attributes applied in trade. Each statement contains responses at a 6-point scale. These 6 possibilities reflect the degree of identification and agreement with a statement (definitely no; no; rather no than yes; 4 rather yes than no; 5 yes; definitely yes). The following statement is presented as an example: “Coaching enabled me to try new or different ways of doing things at work”. When searching and evaluating different connections and differences of the assessment of coaching and its attributes, the lowest value 1 says that a coached person does not agree with the given statement and opposite to that, the value 6 expresses the maximum agreement possible. The research sample consisted of 298 trade managers, out of which 175 managers had meetings with a coaching approach and 123 managers without a coaching approach. The research sample included 185 women and 113 men aged from 20 to 58 years. Their average age was 31,2 years (the standard deviation was 5,2).

The acquired data were processed in the statistical programme SPSS 22. Based on the results of the KMO test (0.951) and the Bartlett sphericity test (5990, significance 0.000) and using a factor analysis, the Principal Component Method with Varimax rotation was used. Three factors of coaching assessment were extracted and were subsequently named and defined:

F1: BEHAVIOUR. This factor is saturated by ten items and is focused on the use of experience from coaching. The content context is related to understanding of one's own responsibility for oneself and one's own life, finding answers, thinking about one's own behaviour, activities, achieving a viewpoint at oneself, with a help of getting on better with people, developing empathy, using experience from coaching and its influence on privacy, with a change of behaviour and overcoming oneself.

F2: EMOTIONS. This factor relates to how individuals experience coaching on their own. It focuses on the delight from a relationship between a coach and a coached person, whether individuals are full of expectations before coaching and are looking forward to it, on the balance and relaxation during a coaching session and positive mood after it. It also focuses on whether they like to work on themselves through coaching and perceive it as a way that helps to work more effectively. This factor is saturated with eight items.

F3: COGNITIONS. This factor is saturated with five items. These items specify the factor from the point of view of the individuals' willingness to try new or different ways of doing things, developing potential, doing things more effectively, changing the standard and routine working procedures and achieving better results at work.

Results Presentation

The extracted factors explain 66,22% of the variance (Table 1). This percentage of the explained variance is acceptable, therefore adding other factors that would increase the given percentage would be inappropriate and at the same time, other factors could not be meaningfully specified in terms of the content. In Table 1, the extracted factors behaviour, emotions, and cognitions are described.

Table 1. Saturation of extracted factors by individual items (methodology AC-BEC)

Items in questionnaire	Behaviour	Emotions	Cognitions
Coaching enabled me to try new or different ways of doing things at work			,794
Coaching helped me to develop my potential			,762
Based on coaching, I think about how things could be done more effectively			,780
Thanks to coaching, I change my standard and routine working procedures			,851
Coaching enabled me to achieve better results at work			,656

I use experience from coaching in my personal life, too	,703		
In coaching, I realize my own responsibility for myself and my life	,663		
Coaching helped me to find answers to my questions	,755		
Coaching helped me to think about my behaviour, activities etc.	,792		
Coaching enabled me to acquire my own view on myself	,893		
Coaching helps me to get along better with people	,842		
Coaching sessions also affected my privacy	,795		
Coaching helped me to change my behaviour	,863		
I have overcome myself by the help of coaching	,874		
Coaching helped me to develop empathy	,819		
I realize that coaching is a way that helps to work more effectively		,778	
I enjoy the relationships between me and the coach		,819	
Coaching sessions cause the balance in me		,877	
I am relaxed during coaching		,847	
Before coaching, I am full of expectations		,728	
I am looking forward to coaching sessions		,842	
After a coaching session, I am in a good mood		,898	
I like to work on myself through coaching		,814	
Eigenvalue	6,301	5,282	5,957
% Variance	27,398	22,966	15,858
Cumulatively %	27,398	50,364	66,222

Source: Own processing

In terms of the content, it was possible to specify the extracted factors unequivocally. This structure of factors is also proved by the result of the Scree plot method used (Figure 1).

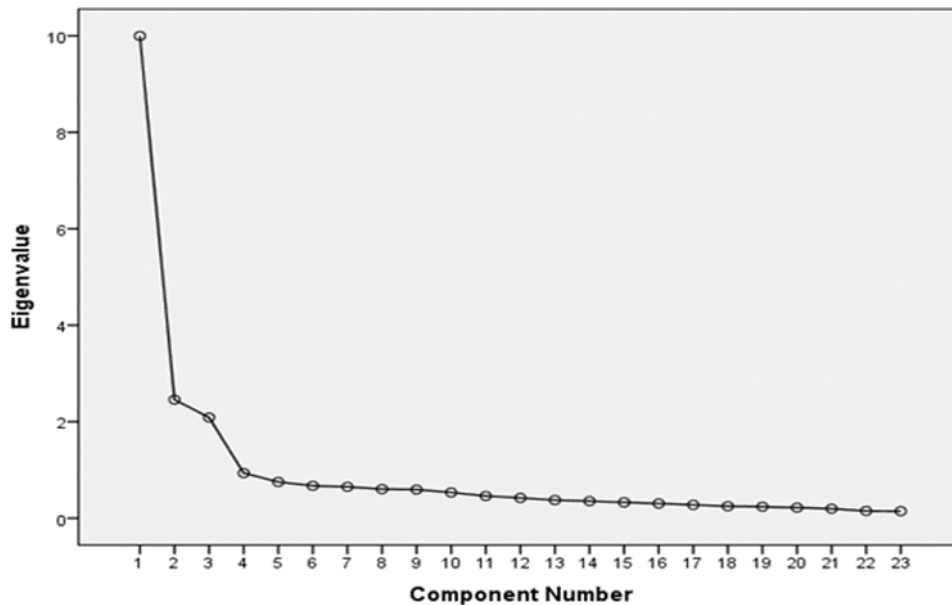


Figure 1: Factors identified with the method of Scree plot (own processing)

It is also confirmed by high values of the coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha showing that the internal composition of the elements saturating the specified factor is within the acceptability range: the value of Cronbach's Alpha for the factor of Behaviour is 0,940; Cronbach's Alpha for the factor of Emotion is 0,931, Cronbach's Alpha for the factor of Cognitions is 0,818.

The structure of the coaching assessment presented by us that is created by three factors is identical with a three-part model of attitudes mentioned in the publication of the authors Fedorko and Tutokyová (2014).

The extracted factors – behaviour, emotions and cognitions confirmed that it is possible to classify the attributes of the assessment of coaching. The extracted factors testify in favour of considering the existence of a certain structure of attributes for assessing coaching by trade managers.

Differences and connections in assessing coaching attributes

Different assessment of coaching attributes by the trade managers was determined using a nonparametric Friedman test for dependent samples, the results of which were statistically significant. In assessing the perception of the given factors – behaviour, emotions, and cognitions, low values indicate a low level of identification (agreement) with a given statement, on the contrary to that, high values represent a high level of identification. The results show that the highest value of identification was by the factor of cognitions and the lowest degree of agreement by the factor of behaviour. Using the Friedman test, it was found out that trade managers want to try new things at work, they are willing to develop

themselves, do things more effectively, achieve better results, and change the usual standard working procedures. A coaching session arouses positive emotions by the coached people but to a lower extent when compared to the factor of cognitions. The lowest values, but still positive, were achieved by the factor of behaviour reflecting whether the trade managers use coaching experience and whether they have changed through coaching. Although the factor of behaviour shows the lowest values, i.e. the lowest degree of agreement, it could be stated that its assessment is still positive, but compared to other factors, at least (Table 2, Graph 1).

Table 2. Different assessment of the extracted coaching factors

Factors	Median	Significance
Behaviour	4,00	0,000
Emotions	4,50	0,000
Cognitions	5,40	0,000

Source: Own processing

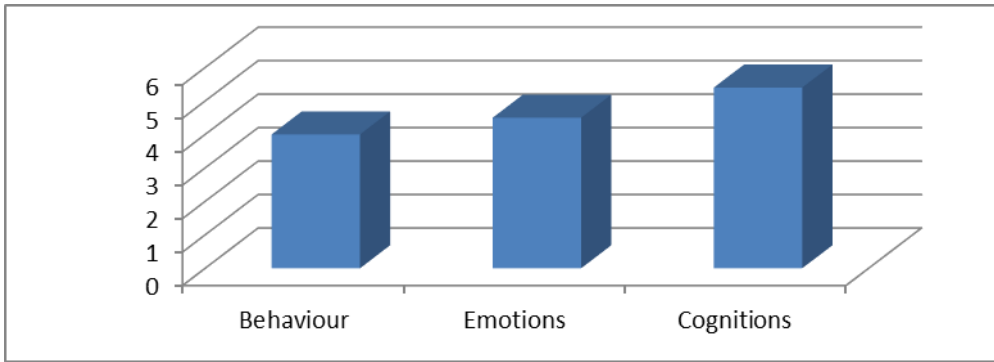


Figure 2: Different assessment of the extracted coaching factors (own processing)

Looking for connections in assessing coaching attributes by the trade managers, positive correlations were found among all extracted factors. The presented finding indicates that if the trade managers assess one coaching attribute positively, they will have a positive approach also to the other two. If they have e.g. a positive emotion related to coaching, their behaviour will be positive as well as the assessment of the cognitions attribute. This claim is proved with the values given in Table 3 containing the results of the Spearman’s correlation coefficient and the statistical significance.

Table 3. Intercorrelations of extracted factors

Factors	Emotions	Behaviour
Cognitions	,368** ,000	,342** ,000
Emotions		,599** ,000
** statistical significance at the significance level 0,05		

Source: Own processing

With the above-mentioned findings, the existence of connections in assessing coaching attributes by trade managers was confirmed.

Discussion

Analysing the data obtained from a questionnaire research with the aim to identify the attributes of coaching assessment by trade managers and its partial aim to verify a new AC-BEC methodology – the assessment of coaching from the point of view of behaviour, emotions, and cognitions, using mathematical-statistical methods, the following conclusions can be further discussed.

The highest degree of agreement with a given statement by trade managers was identified by the factor of cognitions which means that the respondents want to try new things at work, they want to develop, do things more effectively, achieve better results at work and change the standard work procedures. The lowest degree of agreement was found out by the behaviour factor but still with positive values. It was interesting to find out that if trade managers assess one coaching attribute positively, they will assess the other two attributes also positively.

In identifying the attributes of the assessment of coaching by trade managers, we were inspired by the views of the authors, who describe the research of cognitions, emotions, and other phenomena that can also illuminate human behaviour and experience. Emotions stimulate the cognitive processing of what happened (Prokopčáková, 2010). Schwarz and Clore (2007) report that emotions affect cognitions much more than behaviour which supports the feedback theory according to which emotions stimulate learning and thus cognitions, too. According to Baumeister et al. (2009), emotions can guide behavioural choices, and therefore behaviour follows emotions.

Coaching is an appropriate managerial tool of human capital development since it is focused on awareness and activity (Emerson and Loehr, 2008). Training and coaching for managers should aim for complex development with emphasis to soft

skills as an essential factor in management development (Horák, Matošková, 2018). Coaching can be perceived through three factors that were extracted - behaviour, emotions, and cognitions. Shaw and Linnecar (2007) believe that coaching can have a positive influence on the success of trade as well as on the performance of trade managers. Fleming and Taylor (2004) say that regarding the work environment, it can help people to improve their performance. Coaching is a key to the formation of an open and friendly organization that can appreciate the abilities and ideas of its people and honestly tries to support the individuals.

The limitations of the research could be seen in the research sample that consisted of trade managers only. In the future, other groups of respondents could be included in the research, too. It could be considered in the context of intercultural or gender differences. As part of further studies in the future, it is also suggested to expand the issue with an analysis of the relationship between the assessment of coaching and the typology of managers' personalities.

Conclusion

Several findings were revealed in the research. Three factors of coaching were identified and specified – behaviour, emotions, and cognitions. These three attributes were analysed in the context of the coaching assessment by trade managers. The data analysis confirmed the existence of statistically significant differences in the assessment of individual extracted factors. Trade managers expressed the highest degree of agreement with a given statement in the factor of cognitions. Contrarily, the lowest level of agreement was found in the assessment of the behaviour factor. At the same time, statistically significant correlations between the individual factors of coaching assessment were confirmed.

The results show that in coaching, it is important to monitor and evaluate all attributes separately and it is not possible to look at this process as a whole. The obtained results presented in the paper contribute to the theory, methodology and application of coaching in the practice of trade managers and to the development of human capital.

Acknowledgements

The paper is supported by a grant project KEGA No. 012PU-4/2020.

References

- Abbott, G., et al., (2010). *Excellence in Coaching: The industry guide*, India, Replika Press Pvt. Ltd., 288 p.
- Clegg, B., (2005). *Motivace [Motivation]*, Brno, CP Books, 115 p.
- Crosbie, R., (2005). *Learning the soft skills of leadership*, Industrial and commercial training, 37 (1), p. 45-51.
- Baumeister, R. F., Dewall C. N., Vohs K. D. & Alquist J. L., (2009). *Does emotion cause behaviour (Apart from making people do stupid, destructive things)?*, [in:] C. R.

- Agnew, D. E. Carlston, W. G. Graziano, J. R. Kelly (Eds.). Then a miracle occurs: Focusing on behaviour in social psychological theory and research. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Downey, M., (2003). *Effective coaching: Lessons from the coaches' coach*, New York, London, Texere.
- Emerson, B., Loehr, A., (2008). *A Manager's Guide to Coaching: Simple and Effective Ways to Get the Best from Your Employee*, New York, Amacom, 240 p.
- Fedorko, V., Tutoková, M., (2014). Učebný zdroj ako prostriedok eliminácie predsudkov. [Study source as tool for eliminating prejudices], Bratislava, Metodicko-pedagogické centrum, 91 p.
- Fleming, I., Taylor, J. D. A., (2004). *The Coaching Pocketbook*, Alresford, UK, Management Pocketbooks Ltd.
- Gallwey, W. T., (2001). *The Inner Game of Work: Focus, Learning, Pleasure, and Mobility in the Workplace*, New York, Random House, 256 p.
- Gallwey, W. T., (2004). Tajemství vysoké pracovní výkonnosti [The secret of high work performance], Praha, Management Press, 253 p.
- Goldsmith, M., Lyons, L. S., & McArthur, S, (2012). *Coaching for Leadership: Writings on Leadership from the World's Greatest Coaches*, Pfeiffer, 313 p.
- Green, J., Grant, A. M, (2003). *Solution-Focused Coaching: Managing People in A Complex World*, Harlow, Pearson education limited, 208 p.
- Grobler, P.A. and De Bruyn, A.J. (2018). High-performance work practices (HPWPs) in determining success of South African companies: fact or fiction?. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 15(1), 288-313.
- Haberleitner, E., Deistler, E., Ungvari, R., (2009). Führen, Fördern, Coachen: So entwickeln Sie die Potenziale Ihrer Mitarbeiter, Piper Verlag, 256 p.
- Horák, M., Matošková, J., (2018). Comparison of Training Programmes and Activities for Cluster Managers in Europe with Respect to their Focus on Skills Development, *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Knowledge*, 6/1, 16-29.
- Horváthová, P., (2011). *The Application of Talent Management at Human Resource Management in Organization*, 3rd International Conference on Information and Financial Engineering (ICIFE 2011). China, Shanghai, p. 50-54.
- Hunt, J. W., Baruch, Y., (2003). Developing Top Managers: The Impact of Interpersonal Skills Training, *Journal of Management Development*, 22/8, 729-752.
- Ismail, N., Kot, S., Abd Aziz, A. S., & Rajiani, I. (2020). From innovation to market: Integrating university and industry perspectives towards commercialising research output. *Forum Scientiae Oeconomia*, 8(4), 99-115.
- Kot, S., Meyer, N. and Broniszewska, A., (2016). A cross-country Comparison of the Characteristics of Polish and South African Women Entrepreneurs, *Economics and Sociology*, 9/4, 207-221.
- Maciejewski, G., Mokrysz, S. and Wróblewski, Ł., (2019). Segmentation of Coffee Consumers Using Sustainable Values: Cluster Analysis on the Polish Coffee Market. *Sustainability*, 11, 613.
- Prokopčáková, A., (2010). Kontrafaktové myslenie a negatívne emócie, Kognitívny portrét človeka, s. 294-314.
- Shaw, P., Linnekar, R, (2007). *Business coaching*, Chichester, Capstone Publishing Ltd.

- Schwarz, N., Clore, G. L., (2007). Feelings and phenomenal experiences. [in:] E. T. Higgins, A. Kruglanski (Eds.). *Social psychology: Hand-book of basic principles* (2nd Edition), 385-407. New York, Guilford.
- Stará, J. J., Peterson, CH., (2017). Understanding the Concept of Wellness for the Future of the Tourism Industry: A Literature Review. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 14, 18-29.
- Suchý, J., Náhlovský, P., (2007). *Koučování v manažerské praxi* [Coaching in managerial practice], Praha, Grada Publishing, 128 p.
- Štefko, R., Királ'ová, A. and Mudřík, M., (2015). Strategic Marketing Communication in Pilgrimage Tourism, *Procedia – Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 175, 423-430.
- Thorne, K., Pellant, A., (2007). *Rozvíjíme a motivujeme manažerov* [We develop and motivate managers], Brno, Computer Press, 142
- Tóth, A., Juhász, T., Kálmán, B., (2020). The Role of Innovation and Human Factor in the Development of East Central Europe, *Montenegrin Journal of Economics*, 16/1, 251-274.
- Whitmore, J., (2009). *Coaching for Performance: The Principles and Practices of Coaching and Leadership*, Boston, Nicholas Brealey Publishing,
- Wilson, C., (2007). *Best Practice in Performance Coaching*, London, Cogan Page

OCENA COACHINGU PRZEZ MENEDŻERÓW HANDLU

Streszczenie: Coaching to jedno z narzędzi rozwoju menedżerów handlowych i odkrywania ich ukrytego potencjału. To narzędzie do poszukiwania satysfakcji, motywacji i skuteczności. Celem artykułu jest identyfikacja atrybutów oceny coachingu przez menedżerów handlowych. Jego częściowym celem jest weryfikacja nowej metodologii AC-BEC - oceny coachingu z punktu widzenia zachowań, emocji i poznania, trzech czynników, które zostały wyodrębnione w badaniach. Podana metodologia została stworzona w celu poszerzenia wachlarza możliwości identyfikacji czynników oceny coachingu przez handlowców. Wyniki pokazują, że menedżerowie działający w handlu chętnie próbują nowych rzeczy, chcą się rozwijać osobiście i być bardziej efektywni, a w coachingu konieczne jest indywidualne monitorowanie i ocena wszystkich atrybutów. Nie można spojrzeć na ten proces jako całość.

Słowa kluczowe: coaching, metodologia AC-BEC, emocje, zachowanie, poznanie

贸易经理对教练的评估

摘要:教练是贸易经理发展和发现其潜在潜力的工具之一。它是寻求满意度,动力和有效性的工具。本文旨在确定贸易经理进行的教练评估的属性。其部分目的是验证一种新的AC-BEC方法论-

从行为,情感和认知的角度对教练进行评估,这是研究中提取的三个因素。创建给定的方法是为了扩大识别贸易经理指导评估因素的可能性范围。结果表明,从事贸易的管理人员愿意尝试新事物,他们希望个人发展并变得更有效率,并且在教练方面,有必要单独监视和评估所有属性。不可能从整体上看待这个过程。

关键词:教练, AC-BEC方法论, 情绪, 行为, 认知