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REQUIREMENT PROFILE - SLOVENIA

1. Introduction

The centre of the following document is a requirement profile for a case manager in Slovenia. The profile describes the qualities that a case manager should possess in order to fulfil the role. The profile consists of key competencies, which are the abilities of an individual, and can be encompass knowledge, skill and professionalism.

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2. Methodical approach to create a country specific requirement profile for case managers

The creation of country specific profiles is guided by the following question: “Which technical and interdisciplinary competencies do specialised personnel need to work as case managers in this country?”

The outcome of this approach is the detection competencies that are essential to working as a case manager. Various tools are used to aid this process:

1. KODE[®]X method
2. Guidelines for interviews
3. Standardised Questionnaires

Creation of a target profile using KODE[®]-X

The first step, using the standardised measurement technique KODE[®]-X as a basis, is to get to know which competencies are important for a potential case manager to successfully manage a case. The KODE[®]-X method is applied to determine these competencies.

KODE[®]-X is a measurement technique that measures specific characteristics - in this case competences.¹ Competencies are self-organisational abilities. They “are based on knowledge, constituted by values, allotted as skills, fused by experiences, realised by will power” (Erpenbeck/Heyse 1999 S.162).²

Competencies are incredibly important in open question and decision making situations and in complex systems, as is the case when implementing case management.

¹ Ann.: To ensure the highest scientific standards the FHM-Kompetenzzentrum has been certified as a CeKom[®] (Centrum für Kompetenzbilanzierung). In the scope of CeKom[®] institutions Germany-wide follow the same quality standards to measure competencies. Inter-institutional projects are made possible using this national network.

² Erpenbeck, J. Heyse, V. (1999)

The target groups in the employment promotion field are employees in job centres and recruiting agencies. The target group also includes specialised staff that works with people that are difficult to promote on the job market and/or participate in employment promotion programmes, career counselling, addiction counselling services and institutions that help people with mental-health issues, physical disabilities and special needs.

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The target group in the health care sector consists of employees that work in discharge management in hospitals, specialised staff in day care, residential care, educational counselling, care counselling and specialised staff that work in information centres for old people and people with special needs, as well as the rehabilitation sector. Moreover, specialised staff that counsel in doctors' surgeries should also be targeted.

The KODE[®]-X questionnaire maps 64 interdisciplinary areas of competence. The role of the questioned experts is to determine how significant each competence is for a case manager. A scale ranging from 1 (not important) to 6 (extremely important) was used to measure the significance of each competence. 10 to 20 KODE[®]-X surveys, corresponding to the relative work fields, will be conducted in the participating countries.

Using an analysis of the survey results the most frequently named competencies will be selected and described. The results of the survey regarding required qualifications will provide an overview of the most desirable qualifications. The results will be compared to secondary analyses and expert opinions. The interdisciplinary competence requirements will be expanded using the professional requirements. This approach will provide indicators for the sector and country specific **requirement profile** of a case manager.

The goal of **the standardized questionnaire** is to understand which competencies specialised staff, who wants to work following the case management concept, need for client relations and cooperation with involved organisations. On the one hand the results of the survey will be used to create a requirement profile for case managers. On the other hand the results will be used to specify a training programme for case managers.

In addition to socio-graphic data the questionnaire includes questions about the personal competencies of the case managers³ and the networking work of case management. The survey consists of open and closed questions and a question measuring satisfaction using a scale. The results will be evaluated using frequency analyses and the answers to the open questions will be categorised.

The target group of the survey is similar to that of the KODE[®]-X method; it consists of employees in the health care and employment promotion sector.

The guideline supported interview consists of the following modules: personal profile and personal professional development of the respondent, personal knowledge, expertise and personal evaluation of counselling. The respondents' answers will be given in writing and evaluated using Mayring's⁴ methodology.

The research questions are as follows:

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- What are your most important occupational activities in your organisation?
- Please name the key competencies for your job?
- In which situations are the aforementioned competencies essential?
- How do you define success in terms of working with your clients and/or unemployed people?
- When and where did you develop these strengths? How did you acquire them?
- What are the most important work-related competencies that have led to success in your job?
- What advice would you offer a future social worker/counsellor/ case manager to develop and promote their professional and interdisciplinary competencies?

3 Mayring, Philipp (2002)

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3. Requirement profile for case managers in Slovenia

The requirement profile of a case manager in Slovenia is based on the results of the KODE-X[®] method, the questionnaire and the guideline supported interviews.

Based on the KODE[®]-X job profile central results of the survey and interviews were used to create a competence based requirement profile for a case manager.

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3.1. Results of KODE[®]-X-survey

Results of the survey in Slovenia showed that the competencies reliability, credibility, helpfulness and initiative are considered to be most important. Future case managers are expected to approach their responsibilities in a disciplined and conscientious manner, while being guided by values and ideals. They should act convincingly and motivationally and stimulate the personal development of their clients. This means that personal commitment and the ability to initiate processes are required. Likewise, the training of personal responsibility, communication skills, a normative-ethical attitude and the willingness to actively address problems should be advanced.

Requirement profile according to KODE[®]-X key competencies

Competence	Average
Persistence	5,8
Ability to act/execute	5,8
Self-reliance	5,8
Communicative skills	5,7
Organizational skills	5,6
Adaptability	5,6
Discipline	5,6
Holistic thinking	5,6
Ability to solve problems	5,6
Reliability	5,6
Decision-making ability	5,5
Ability to integrate oneself	5,5
Focus on knowledge	5,5

Fig. 1: Requirement profile according to KODE[®]-X key competencies

Relationship between the key competences and the basic competencies

The four core competencies of the KODE[®]-X method are:

- Personal competence
- Activity and decision making competence
- Professional and methodology competence
- Socio-communicative competence

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The detected key competencies are assigned to the corresponding four core competencies. This results in the following distribution:

Ccompetence	Percent
personal competency	30,77 %
competency of activity and decision-making	23,08 %
professional and methodological competency	23,08 %
social communicative competency	23,08 %

Fig. 2: Core competencies

Additional findings

In addition to the aforementioned findings 15 experts were asked their opinion using a semi-structured questionnaire. Besides the collection of socio-graphic and occupational data the questionnaire focused on the following topics:

- Number and problems of clients as well as their access to advice and the reasons for needing it
- Criteria for job satisfaction and success in the job or in counselling situations
- Challenging situations
- The most important competencies and personal skills that are used in the practice of the profession and how they were acquired
- Which concepts do you work by
- What makes a good advisor and what advice would you give him/her?

In addition to KODE[®] X- questionnaire five experts were interviewed in an anonymous narrative interview. During the interviews biographical data on education, personal development and development of professional and transferable skills was captured as well as information about the interdisciplinary competencies and

interviewees' companies was acquired. The questions as described in chapter 2 are deciding in compiling a competence profile:

3.2. Results of data collection

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In addition to KODE[®]-X questionnaire five experts were interviewed in an anonymous narrative interview. During the interviews biographical data on education, personal development and development of professional and transferable skills was captured as well as information about the interdisciplinary competencies and interviewees' companies was acquired. The questions as described in chapter 2 are guiding in the creation of a competency profile:

Survey results

➤ Sociographic data

The experts who have been questioned work in the area of employment promotion, are medium 39,5 years old, 10 female and 5 male, most of them have university degree, first of all economics and social or political science, but also human resource management, public administration, social work, psychology, law, teacher and public relation.

➤ Counselling activities

13 of them have additional qualifications, first of all as trainers/consultants or in psychotherapy.

Most of them work as consultant/adviser. They have to supervise or to counsel average 5-10 clients per week. The clients are assigned to approach in equal measure voluntarily and by a legal basis, the minority by a third party. The concerns for their approach are e. g. that the clients were not educated about where and when they get help or that they feel limited by legal basis.

Most of the experts collaborate with partners, rather regularly and particularly with employment promotion. To develop and promote their collaborations they would prefer first of all exchange with persons who work in the consulting area and with colleagues and then professional exchange.

Summary of questionnaire and interview results

➤ Successful/joyful work

A successful/joyful work is featured by the results in the empowered workforce: by achieving goals with clients helping them to get improved of living. They like to be user-friendly and user-orientated, especially e. g. in economical crises. Most of the experts are satisfied of their activities, level 7.9 on a scale from one to ten.

- The greatest strengths as a consultant and the competences which essentially contribute success in their job

In their opinion the important skills are analytical skills, dialog ability/customer orientation, relation management, expert and market knowledge, but also holistic thinking, cooperative skills, optimism and the ability to inspire others and to solve problems. They need in a high rate the ability to communicate, above all to understand other's perspectives. A successful worker is characterised further by persistence, persuasion, empathy and confidence. He/she optimally solves problems by leading with the target in mind.

- Strengths have been developed and required

They acquired their consulting skills mostly during their training and studies, but also by themselves. Their personal strengths they gathered during their life, by education or through experiences, struggle at work. They work mostly according to a specific consulting concept, e. g. "doctrine of working with unemployed and employers", a minor number don't or work intuitively. They need their skills in nearly all situations and sometimes in crises. To optimize their consulting activities most of them would like exchange with other consulting people or colleagues, followed by further training, and some of them would like supervision. The topics they are interested in are first of all self-reflection and collaboration with other organizations, followed by conflict management, dealings with clients, knowledge about methods of consulting.

- Advice to future social workers

To future social workers they would give the advice to be open and to network with people, to exchange views and share their thoughts. Further the followers should gather a positive attitude to people and respect for them, and they should obtain a lot of self-reflection and self-knowledge.

4. Summary

The collected results represent a small sample that show trends and are not representative.

Based on the created requirement profile of case managers in the employment promotion field it can be said that the development of the personal competency is considered most important. This means that the competencies personal responsibility, discipline, reliability and decision making are highly valued. The socio-communicative, activity and decision making, and professional and methodology competencies are all expected.

According to the written and oral respondents the goals of their advisory activities are, for example during an economic crisis, to support their clients and fulfil objectives. The results of the interviews and the survey evidenced a high degree of communication skills. Case managers are expected to bear a positive and respectful attitude. Moreover they should have a client-centric and analytical approach. Case managers also need to be

able to reflect on themselves and their actions. They should lead their clients to their agreed upon goals in a persistent, optimistic and confident manner.

In order to develop and strengthen their competencies the interviewees would like an exchange amongst peers and training.

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