

Competency profile of coach – *ComTal-Group Coach*

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1. Theoretical background

1.1. Coaching

Coaching involves setting and achieving professional goals, being open to new learning, and engaging in dialogue for the purpose of improving practice (Robertson, 2005). Coaching is often characterized as being similar to mentoring though less comprehensive. Mertz (2004) characterised coaching as including much less involvement than mentoring and as focusing primarily on professional development rather than career advancement. Coaching may also focus more on a specific skillset rather than more holistic development. When looking for definitions there are a number, indeed a plethora of alternatives. Frequently cited ones include:

1. A process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve (Parsloe, 1999).
2. Unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance (Whitmore, 2002).
3. The art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another (Downey, 2003).
4. To tutor, train, give hints to and prime with facts (Oxford concise dictionary).
5. A coach is a collaborative partner who works with the learner to help them achieve goals, solve problems, learn and develop (Caplan, 2003).
6. The overall purpose of coach-mentoring is to provide help and support for people in an increasingly competitive and pressurized world, in order to help them: develop their skills; improve their performance; maximise their potential; and to become the person they want to be. (CIPD, 2008; Hawkins, Smith, 2006).

Hopkins-Thompson (2000) mentions five interrelated structural components of successful coaching programmes: (1) organizational support, (2) clearly defined outcomes, (3) screening, selecting, and training coaches, (4) focus on learner needs, and (5) continual monitoring and evaluation.

Heslin, van de Wall, Latham (2006) understands coaching as a process through which supervisors may communicate clear expectations to employees, provide feedback and suggestions for improving performance, and facilitate employees' efforts to solve problems or take on new challenges. It consists of regular interactions that help employees adopt effective work skills and behaviours. Heslin, van de Wall, Latham (2006) state: *Coaching may affect individual performance through three mechanisms: the acquisition of job-related knowledge and skills, the enhancement of motivation and effort, and process of social learning. Coaching is an effective source of skill acquisition because supervisors can observe specific employee behaviours and performance and provide constructive feedback and guidelines for improvement.* Heslin, van de Wall, Latham (2006) believe that coaching may affect individual performance through three mechanisms:

1. The acquisition of job-related knowledge and skills.
2. The enhancement of motivation and effort.
3. The process of social learning.

Coaching is an effective source of skill acquisition because supervisors can observe specific employee behaviours and performance and provide constructive feedback and guidelines for improvement. Rather than being less intensive than mentoring, some expert practitioners regard coaching as more intensive than mentoring, as the latter is being 'shown the way' by someone who has 'been there and done it' *i.e.* a more experienced professional (who is much more likely to give advice) whilst coaching is about realising external and internal potential using a number of deeper techniques.

1.2. Group coaching

In group coaching, the client is subject to many different perspectives about their behaviour. The clinical paradigm seeks to short circuit those behaviours helping people to understand the causes of resistance and to recognise where and how they can become more effective (Kets de Vries, 2007). Ward (2008) presents a useful model which practitioners in organisations can deploy with sustainable results. This looks particularly at Group Coaching and why this appears to be so effective, what the commonalities of approach are, and what conditions should exist to optimise the process. Ward (2008) consistently found that, *"the opportunity for executives to examine some earlier life experiences, coupled with relief from ambivalence around their key challenges and a peer group support structure is highly effective as a change agent. Follow-up conversations after three and six months substantiate that change is often in place and that both leadership effectiveness and feedback are positively affected."*

Florent-Treacy (2009) considered group coaching within the proliferation of executive leadership development programmes. These schemes are popular and difficult to evaluate as the candidates tend to be 'successful' before even commencing their activities. The approach examined by Florent-Treacy was one which was both didactic and applied. In it, the participants *coach* and *are coached* within each module. There is an emphasis on both the individual and the system, as groups discuss lifecycle issues and organisational role analyses. Florent-Treacy (2009) states: *"Group coaching in this context helps to establish a foundation of trust, commitment to change, and accountability. Within the boundaries of the programme, as individuals work together and observe each other over time, the group becomes the pillar that supports coaching work"*. Clearly, the boundaries of the programme are significant and need early definition. The inclusion of external real world values and roles are important if the coaching is to be successful at this level. Florent-Treacy (2009) set out the following coaching components:

1. As part of group coaching exercises and courses, people often move through recognised stages (Yalom, Leszcz, 2005).
2. Initial member engagement and affiliation.
3. Focus on control, power, status, competition, and individual differentiation.
4. A long, productive working phase marked by intimacy, engagement, and genuine cohesion.
5. Termination of the group experience.

Florent-Treacy (2009) also recognised a secondary *narrative* process that takes place during the programme:

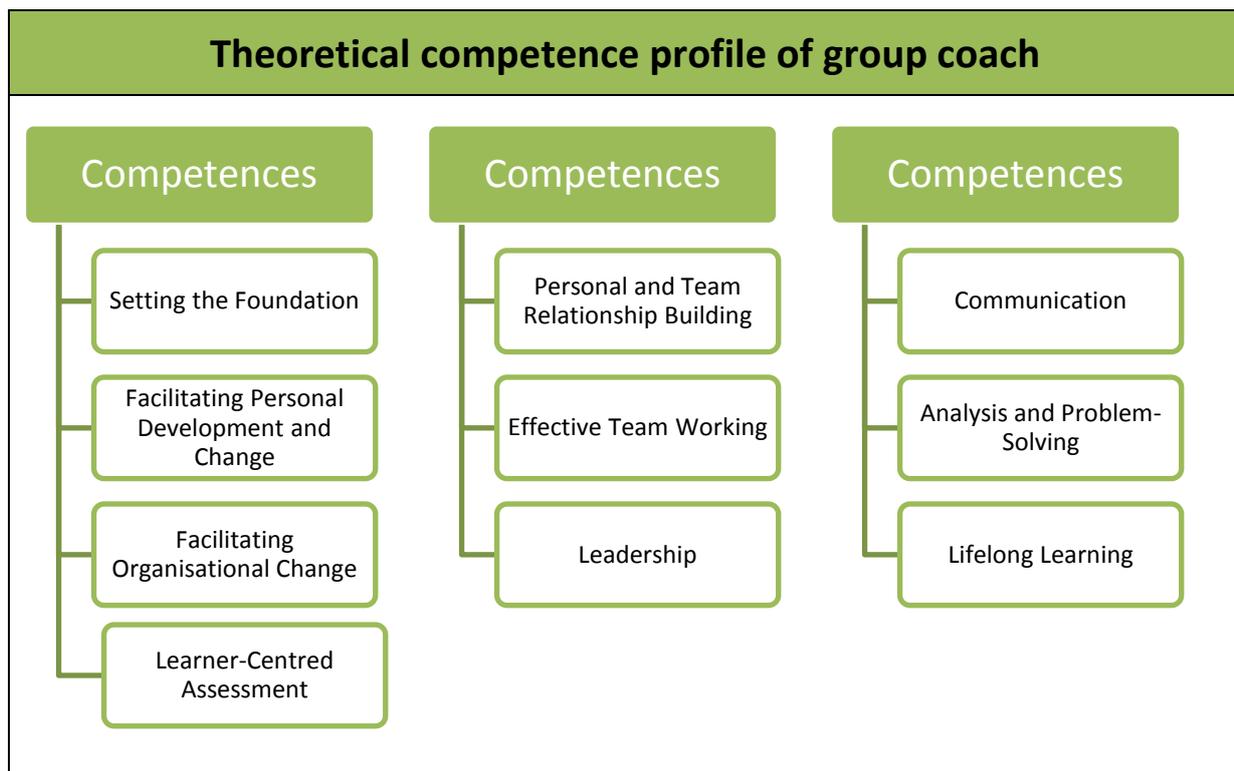
1. Prologue.

2. Introduction focus on external, present.
3. Identity dilemmas – focus on internal, past.
4. Identity exploration and experimentation – internal focus on reframing past and future.
5. Consolidation and denouement – focus on external, future.

1.3. Theoretical competence profile of group coach

The International Coach Federation (ICF) established a set of competencies designed for professional coaching. According to the ICF, the coach-client relationship is a much more intense, in-depth and time-consuming process than on-the-job coaching, which “*focuses mainly on observable behaviour and is of short duration*”. Although the coaching context may differ, the coaching competencies are the same – establishing trust, active listening, powerful questioning, direct communication, planning and goal-setting, managing progress, creating awareness (reflecting), etc. These competencies mirror the values, knowledge and skills competencies identified elsewhere in the literature review (Horn, 2008).

From analysis of the literature, there are an underpinning set of values (attitudes) which cut across all of the 10 Group Coaching Competencies set out below.



1. **Setting the Foundation** - understanding of coaching ethics and standards and ability to apply them appropriately in all coaching situations and the ability to understand what is required in the specific coaching interaction and to come to agreement with the prospective and new client about the coaching process and relationship (ICF Core Competencies, 2013).
2. **Facilitating Personal Development and Change** - making things easier by using a range of skills and methods to bring the best out in people as they work to achieve results in interactive events (Townsend, Donovan, 1999) and desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming (Maslow, 1943).
3. **Facilitating Organisational Change** - organisational change can be defined as a process by which an organisation takes on new ideas to become different. The necessity for change may be brought about by factors in the external environment of the business or from within the business itself (Smit, de Cronje, 1997).
4. **Learner-Centred Assessment** enables (coaches) to answer two key questions: what have my (coaches) learned? And how well have they learned it? (Huba, Freed, 2000).
5. **Personal and Team Relationship Building** - ability to create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust and the ability to be fully conscious and create spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident (ICF Core Competencies, 2013).
6. **Effective Team Working** - ability to co-operate with others, directed at accomplishing the project objectives. It involves honest and open attitude connected with respect for all human values (Muzio, Fisher, Thomas, Peters, 2007; Dainty, Mei-I, Moore, 2005b).
7. **Leadership** - generally described as a sense of responsibility and sense of mission in a long-term perspective, assertiveness and being oriented at achieving the objectives of coaching. Leaders are able to focus on development of the team, they change the system in a creative way and inspire others to undertake actions (Dinsmore, Cabanis-Brewin, 2006; Dainty, Mei-I, Moore, 2005; Skulmoski, Hartman, 2010).
8. **Communication** - comprises written and verbal communication, but also listening skills and proper application of all available communication tools. Moreover, it involves understanding of communication differences, identifying factors which may become a barrier for a coaching success. Communicating is essential for passing assignments and providing instructions (Dinsmore, Cabanis-Brewin, 2006; Dainty, Mei-I, Moore, 2005; Skulmoski, Hartman, 2010).
9. **Analysis and Problem-Solving** - identifies and analyses problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations (US Govt. Office of Personnel Management, 2013).
10. **Lifelong Learning** - the skill to acquire new qualifications constantly, self-development, the use of one's own experience, skills to draw conclusions from mistakes in the process of a coaching (Armstrong, 2007; Millward, Asumeng, McDowall, 2010; Morden, 1997).

2. Procedure of constructing the group coach competence profile and *ComTal-Group Coach* tool

The procedure of constructing the group coach competence profile and *ComTal-Group Coach*, a new tool for diagnosing these competences, making references to this profile, involved a number of stages: drawing up and initial selection of statements, coach testing, statistical establishment of the factor structure. Detailed description of conducted works is presented below.

2.1. Creation of the initial set of statements

The first stage of works over construction of the group coach competence profile involved development of a set of 200 statements referring to 10 aspects, making up the theoretical profile of group coach competences (20 statements per each competence).

Statements were developed in English by experts from the United Kingdom. They were all formulated straightforwardly. Six-item response scale was chosen, where particular categories have the following meanings:

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 – Slightly disagree
- 4 – Slightly agree
- 5 – Agree
- 6 – Strongly agree

Before the start of validation, the statements were assessed in terms of their comprehensiveness for potential users of the method – eight coaches with good command of English (two from the following countries: Belgium, Czech Republic and Great Britain, and one from Poland and Cyprus). These individuals determined to what extent each statement is clear and comprehensible to them (from 1 – totally unclear to 7 – totally clear). Based on these evaluations, arithmetic mean for each statement was calculated; consequently, 15 statements with a mean below 6.5 were eliminated.

Another step in selecting statements for validation was the evaluation to what extent each of them accurately diagnoses and describes a given competence. Twelve experts (psychologists, psychometrists, competence coaches) – two from Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic and the United Kingdom and four experts from Poland, evaluated each statement by referring them to definitions of specific competences, to what extent they are significant for measurement of a given group coach competence. Arbitrators could assign the following grades: 1—when statement is not necessary; 2 – when statement is useful but not essential; 3 – when statement is essential/necessary for assessing particular dimension. Based on these grades, Lawshe's (CVR) content validity ratio (Lawshe, 1975) was calculated for each statement. In further development works on the method, statements whose CVR value was equal to or higher than 0.33 were selected. Ultimately, 142 highest-validity statements were chosen, assigned to 20 competences. The number of statements referring to specific competences ranged from 10 to 20.

The statements were then translated into national languages using collaborative and iterative translation. Individuals conducting group coaching activity evaluated comprehensiveness of statements in their native languages. While preparing the final version of the method, translators considered their suggestions.

As a result, the initial version of the tool was developed, related to the profile of group coach competences. Five language versions were prepared: English, Dutch, Polish, Czech and Greek.

2.2. Structure of the sample participating in validation

Using the initial version of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool, based on the group coach competence profile, 141 individuals (females 40.4%): 28 (19.9%) from Belgium, 10 (7.1%) from Cyprus, 33 (23.4%) from the Czech Republic and Poland respectively and 37 (26.2%) from the United Kingdom were questioned. The basic criterion for selecting subjects to the sample was group coaching experience. Due to cultural differences and various legal solutions in specific partner countries participating in the project, the objective criterion was given up, such as e.g. a certificate, completed course or association with any group coaching organisation. Therefore, investigated individuals conducting group coaching activity didn't have to hold formal qualifications in this respect.

The initial step in statistic analyses consisted in evaluating reliability of responses given to particular test items (statements) by questioned coaches. Referring to assumptions by Thurstone and Chave (1929), personal details of individuals who in more than 95% of items have chosen the same answer were removed – in total, details of three individuals: two from Poland and one from the United Kingdom.

Next, Mahalanobis distance (1930) was calculated for each questioned individual; the distance determines probability of a given case belonging to a given group. For 142 statements, at $p < 0.05$, Mahalanobis distance exceeding 170.81 for specific questioned individuals would indicate an outlier. Mahalanobis distances in the studied group of coaches ranged from 0.47 to 39.66. Thus, all studied individuals were regarded as typical, no outliers have been found.

Further analyses were performed on a sample of 138 individuals (females: 39.1%) conducting group coaching activities: 28 individuals (20.3%) from Belgium, 10 individuals (7.2%) from Cyprus, 33 (23.9%) from the Czech Republic, 31 (22.5%) from Poland and 36 (26.1%) from the United Kingdom. Specific characteristics of the studied group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the studied group of coaches

		Country					
		EU	BE	CY	CZ	PL	UK
Sex	Female	N = 54 (39.1%)	N = 8 (28.6%)	N = 1 (10%)	N = 17 (51.5%)	N = 13 (41.9%)	N = 15 (41,7%)
	Male	N = 84 (60.9%)	N = 20 (71.4%)	N = 9 (90%)	N = 16 (48.5%)	N = 18 (58.1%)	N = 21 (58,3%)
Age (years) – average		45,06	46.46	45.50	41.61	39.23	52.03
Experience (years) – average	in group coaching	6.63	8.07	16.40	3.52	3.39	8.44
	in individual coaching	7.55	7.29	15.40	5.27	4.84	10.00
Number of completed group coaching sessions (average)		79,08	32.71	88.50	191.15	20.55	60.19
Number of group coaching sessions in the last 2 months (average)		4,75	6.32	4.70	6.97	2.32	3.61
Education	High School	N = 14 (10.3%)	N = 1 (3.6%)	N = 0 (19.2%)	N = 4 (12.9%)	N = 2 (6.5%)	N = 7 (19,4%)
	Bachelor's degree	N = 44 (32.4%)	N = 15 (53.6%)	N = 5 (50%)	N = 7 (22.6%)	N = 2 (6.5%)	N = 15 (41,7%)
	Master's degree	N = 71 (52.2%)	N = 12 (42.9%)	N = 5 (50%)	N = 14 (45.2%)	N = 27 (87.1%)	N = 13 (36,1%)
	PhD	N = 7 (5.1%)	N = 0 (0%)	N = 0 (0%)	N = 6 (19.4%)	N = 0 (0%)	N = 1 (2,8%)
Completed course	in individual coaching	N = 84 (60.9%)	N = 13 (46.4%)	N = 10 (100%)	N = 19 (57.6%)	N = 19 (61.3%)	N = 23 (63,9%)
	in group coaching	N = 69 (50.0%)	N = 19 (67.9%)	N = 10 (100%)	N = 9 (27.3%)	N = 15 (48.4%)	N = 16 (44,4%)
Holding a coach certificate		N = 77 (55,8%)	N = 20 (71.4%)	N = 6 (60%)	N = 17 (51.5%)	N = 14 (45.2%)	N = 20 (55.6%)
Membership in coach associations		N = 48 (34,8%)	N = 14 (50%)	N = 4 (40%)	N = 7 (21.2%)	N = 9 (29%)	N = 14 (38.9%)

N – population

2.3. Creating scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool related to the profile of group coach competences

The first step in developing scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool was elimination of statements correlating with the social desirability variable, that is those which respondents are inclined to falsify, in order to make them more socially desirable. Social desirability was measured using a few statements from The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale developed by Crowne and Marlowe (1960, 1964). Five statements correlating with social desirability at $rho > |0.2|$ have been eliminated from subsequent analyses.

Next, using the body of 137 statements, series of exploratory factor analyses have been performed using principal component analysis, with oblimin rotation, without modification of *delta* value. Due to a relatively small validation sample and the need to meet

formal requirements for application of this kind of psychometric analyses, three series of analyses have been conducted:

1. for competences related to the coaching process and methods: *Setting the foundation, Facilitating personal development and change, Facilitating organisational change, Learner-centred assessment*;
2. for competences related to team working: *Personal and team relationship building, Effective team working, Leadership*;
3. for personal coach competences: *Communication, Analysis and Problem-solving, Lifelong learning*.

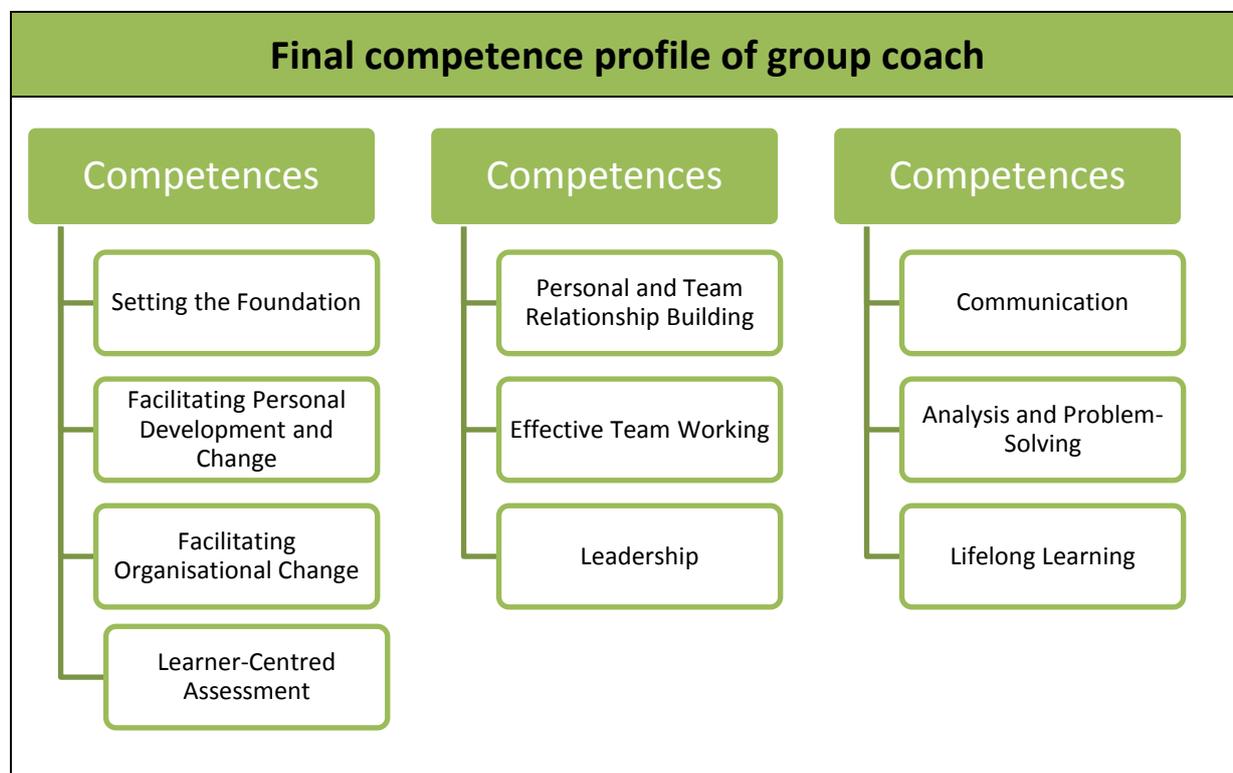
Measure of Sampling Adequacy (for three series of analyses respectively: 0.80; 0.83 and 0.79) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (at $p < 0.001$ in each series) for last steps of individual analyses proved to be satisfactory, which formally confirms relevance of selection of the factor analysis. Threshold value for loadings of testing items was 0.40. Specific solutions (factor analyses) composed of 4, 3 and 3 aspects, account for, respectively 64.63%, 59.24% and 56.66% of variance related to group coach competences.

The aforementioned analyses have empirically confirmed and led to development of the final group coach competence profile, as well as allowed to select statements making up particular scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool. In the exploratory factor analysis, 10 scales/dimensions have been selected, corresponding to 10 initially assumed competences. Each aspect was represented by statements originally assigned to a given competence.

Conducted statistical analyses confirm the assumed theoretical arrangement of group coach competences and they point to high theoretical, factor validity of the newly-developed tool.

3. Competence profile and description of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool

Final group coach competence profile, confirmed by empirical studies, precisely corresponds to the initially assumed theoretical profile.



ComTal-Group Coach tool, referring to this profile is composed on 58 statements divided into 10 scales. Individual scales of the tool diagnose the level of specific group coach competences included in the profile.

Therefore, *ComTal-Group Coach* tool is designed to evaluate the level of group coach competences. The test is provided electronically. The questioned individual after expressing their approach to specific test items (using the six-item scale – from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’) receives feedback about the level of their competences together with instructions regarding further development.

4. Psychometric properties of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool related to competence profile of group coach

Conducted tests and data received therefrom allowed to estimate psychometric properties of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool related to the group coach competence profile (among others, validity and reliability).

4.1. Descriptive statistics of scales

For each scale of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool, points (according to the six-item response scale) assigned by questioned individuals to statements making up a given aspect of competence were totalled. Next, descriptive statistics of results obtained in validation tests in specific test scales were prepared. Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool for all countries altogether.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool for all countries

Competences	Mean	Standard deviation	Min.	Max.	Median	Skewness	Kurtosis
Setting the foundation	24.87	3.59	5	30	25	-2.58	12.17
Facilitating personal development and change	25.39	2.66	19	30	25	-0.01	-0.43
Facilitating organisational change	28.70	3.91	15	36	29	-0.67	0.64
Learner-centred assessment	23.36	4.21	6	30	24	-1.48	3.38
Personal and team relationship building	31.36	3.13	22	36	31	-0.59	0.18
Effective team working	30.20	3.40	10	36	30	-1.71	8.00
Leadership	24.42	2.86	15	30	25	-0.73	1.06
Communication	40.62	3.72	23	48	40	-0.77	2.90
Analysis and Problem-solving	28.96	4.11	15	36	30	-0.98	2.01
Lifelong learning	30.14	3.88	19	36	30	-0.38	-0.06

Skewness, as a measure of asymmetrical distribution, shows that scales leaning most to the right are: *Setting the foundations*, *Effective team working* and *Learner-centred assessment*. In case of these competences, individuals with high scores prevail, which is however typical for self-descriptive methods. Kurtosis, on the other hand, as a relative measure of concentration and flattening of the distribution, confirms that in case of the same three competences, we may speak about leptokurtic distributions, that is the highest concentration of values around the mean.

4.2. Reliability

Reliability coefficients indicate accuracy with which a given variable is measured – the higher the coefficient, approximating 1, the higher accuracy of measurement (cf. Hornowska, 2010). Table 3 presents reliability coefficients, *Cronbach's alpha* internal consistency of individual scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool.

Table 3. Reliability coefficients for scales in *ComTal - Coach* tool

Competences	No. of items	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i> reliability coefficient					
		EU	BE	CY	CZ	PL	UK
Setting the foundation	5	0.87	0.58	0.87	0.73	0.75	0.97
Facilitating personal development and change	5	0.85	0.82	0.90	0.75	0.87	0.88
Facilitating organisational change	6	0.84	0.90	0.84	0.85	0.84	0.77
Learner-centred assessment	5	0.88	0.85	0.83	0.77	0.92	0.88
Personal and team relationship building	6	0.81	0.52	0.67	0.75	0.90	0.80
Effective team working	6	0.87	0.84	0.87	0.81	0.95	0.73
Leadership	5	0.80	0.84	0.29	0.75	0.87	0.60
Communication	8	0.81	0.76	0.83	0.84	0.79	0.81
Analysis and Problem-solving	6	0.88	0.86	0.90	0.91	0.89	0.84
Lifelong learning	6	0.87	0.89	0.85	0.85	0.87	0.86

Reliability coefficients estimated on the basis of data collected from all countries participating in the project, indicate satisfactory level of accuracy of group coach competence measurements by means of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool – in all scales they exceeded 0.8 required in the psychological individual diagnosis. Due to low *Cronbach's alpha* reliability coefficient for *Leadership* in testing Cyprian coaches, results obtained using this scale in Cyprus should be approached very carefully. Similar approach should be applied to Belgian coaches in the scales: *Setting the foundation* and *Personal and team relationship building*. Low values of *alpha* reliability coefficient in selected countries may derive from cultural differences or specific constitution of the studied sample. In future analyses, careful investigation of items included in key aspects appears to be significant. It is also necessary to conduct measurements on a larger number of coaches and re-assess reliability.

4.3. Validity

In order to check validity, that is evaluate whether *ComTal-Group Coach* tool provides measurements compliant with its intended purpose (cf. Hornowska, 2010). Conducted exploratory factor analysis described above confirms theoretical validity of the newly-constructed *ComTal-Team Coach* tool for diagnosing group coach competences.

Moreover, based on (1) experience in group coaching activity expressed in years, (2) number of completed coaching sessions, and (3) completed group coaching course, group coach professional success indicator has been calculated. General professional success indicator results from the factor analysis of these three variables, saved using the *Anderson-Rubin method*. This indicator was correlated with results in specific competence scales, which acts as the measure of validity of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool. Correlation coefficients are presented in table 4.

Table 4. Correlations of scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool with success indicators

	General success indicator (Pearson's r)	Group coaching experience (Pearson's r)	Number of completed group coaching sessions (Pearson's r)	Completion of group coaching course (Eta)
<i>Competences</i>				
Setting the foundation	$r = 0.07$	$r = 0.02$	$r = 0.14$	$Eta = 0.01$
Facilitating personal development and change	$r = 0.26^{**}$	$r = 0.24^{**}$	$r = 0.09$	$Eta = 0.20$
Facilitating organisational change	$r = 0.20^*$	$r = 0.27^{***}$	$r = 0.01$	$Eta = 0.08$
Learner-centred assessment	$r = 0.26^{**}$	$r = 0.23^{**}$	$r = 0.27^{**}$	$Eta = 0.02$
Personal and team relationship building	$r = 0.12$	$r = 0.16$	$r = 0.02$	$Eta = 0.05$
Effective team working	$r = 0.21^{**}$	$r = 0.16$	$r = 0.19^*$	$Eta = 0.09$
Leadership	$r = 0.29^{***}$	$r = 0.29^{***}$	$r = 0.29^{***}$	$Eta = 0.01$
Communication	$r = 0.24^{**}$	$r = 0.14$	$r = 0.10$	$Eta = 0.29$
Analysis and problem-solving	$r = 0.34^{***}$	$r = 0.27^{***}$	$r = 0.31^{***}$	$Eta = 0.11$
Lifelong learning	$r = 0.34^{***}$	$r = 0.28^{***}$	$r = 0.22^{**}$	$Eta = 0.21$

* significant correlation at $p < 0.05$; ** significant correlation at $p < 0.01$; *** significant correlation at $p < 0.001$

Results of conducted analyses point to a satisfactory validity of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool. Only in case of two scales – *Setting the foundation* and *Personal and team relationship building* – no relationship with professional success of group coach was confirmed. In all configurations, the nature of connections of success with coach competences is the same. The higher the level of competence, the higher the level of success of a group coach. Based on the number of significant correlations, it might be said that the tool has 80% validity (8 correlations with the general success indicator).

Table 5 presents correlations between specific scales of *ComTal-Group Coach* tool – aspects of group coach competences. Values of Pearson's r correlation coefficients point to a relative internal consistency of the competence profile. In case of a vast majority of coefficients, correlation is statistically significant and it falls into the range between 0.17 to 0.64.

Table 5. Intercorrelations of scales in *ComTal - Coach* tool

	Setting the foundation	Facilitating personal development and change	Facilitating organisational change	Learner-centred assessment	Personal and team relationship building	Effective team working	Leadership	Communication	Analysis and problem-solving
Facilitating personal development and change	0.30**								
Facilitating organisational change	0.19*	0.32**							
Learner-centred assessment	0.18*	0.20*	0.44**						
Personal and team relationship building	0.23**	0.58**	0.41**	-0.07					
Effective team working	0.40**	0.50**	0.50**	0.43**	0.38**				
Leadership	0.17*	0.45**	0.36**	0.50**	0.35**	0.27**			
Communication	0.23**	0.54**	0.44**	0.21*	0.49**	0.60**	0.24**		
Analysis and problem-solving	0.26**	0.32**	0.44**	0.57**	0.25**	0.43**	0.64**	0.27**	
Lifelong learning	0.17*	0.43**	0.27**	0.00	0.41**	0.22*	0.33**	0.36**	0.16

Statistical significance at: ** $p < 0.001$, * $p < 0.01$

Only between the following pairs of competences: *Learner-centred assessment* and *Personal and team relationship building* and *Lifelong learning* as well as between *Analysis and Problem-solving* and *Lifelong learning*, no statistically significant correlations have been found.

4.4. Normalization

Normalization enables interpretation of scores obtained by individual study participants in the population (Hornowska, 2010). Norms for each competence were calculated based on scores of 138 participants conducting group coaching activities. Detailed description of the sample for normalization purposes is presented in Table 1. Due to a small-size sample of participating coaches, only general European norms, with no division to specific countries participating in the project were developed. Sten scores were chosen as the normalization scale, where 1-4 means low score, 5-6 - average, and 7-10 high score. In the developed tool, total raw scores obtained for each competence (aspect) are automatically converted by computer software to sten scores.

Apart from assessing the competence level, *ComTal-Group Coach* tool allows to determine competence gaps by referring to the standard. Its value was calculated based on the study on 138 group coaches (cf. Table 1), and expressed by means of the median (*Me*). In

descriptive statistics, the median is the numerical value separating the higher half of a data set from the lower half, each half including 50% of all observations. The statistics enabled to find a threshold value describing the scores according to the categories: above and below the median. It enables to determine whether scores of an individual participant are placed in the higher or lower half in relation to average scores recorded by group coaches. For instance, if a study participant in the aspect *Setting the foundation* obtained a score of 28, this would mean that his/her competences in this aspect are above the median for the group of coaches. The score of 20, on the other hand, would suggest that competences of this participant in this aspect are below average. The standard expressed as the median was converted into sten scores.

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