



Vzdelávanie a kultúra

Program celoživotného vzdelávania



## ***Project result No. 7***

# ***REPORT ON THE CORE COMPETENCES OF SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURS / MANAGERS***

*realized within the project*

***TITTESI***

***„Transfer of innovative training tools for entrepreneurial skills improvement“***

**Lifelong Learning Programme  
Leonardo da Vinci  
LLP/LDV/TOI/2009/SK/93100533**

**2010**

## **Project partners:**

### **Coordinator:**

P0 Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry –  
Prešov Regional Chamber, Slovakia

### **Partners:**

- P1 Istituto Formazione Operatori Aziendali /  
IFOA, Italy
- P2 Institute for Economic Promotion of the Austrian  
Federal Chamber of Commerce – Team International  
Know-how Transfer / WIFI, Austria
- P3 A-Omega, Ltd, Slovakia
- P4 Apeiron EU, Ltd., Slovakia
- P5 BWG, k.s., Slovakia
- P6 Elcom, Ltd., Slovakia
- P7 Ploskon AT, Ltd., Slovakia
- P8 Regada, Ltd., Slovakia

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# SURVEY REPORT

**Survey period:** 25.2. – 30.6.2010

**Target group:**

- Experienced/successful business managers and entrepreneurs in small and medium-size businesses.

**Sample:**

The survey sample included 30 experienced business managers and entrepreneurs. The survey was implemented in Slovakia - eastern and western Slovakia.

**Survey objectives:**

- The main objective of the survey was to find out, through an analysis, the level of core competences of experienced/successful Slovak business entrepreneurs and managers on the basis of their self-assessment.
- Another objective of the survey was to find out the level of competences the Slovak business managers and entrepreneurs would like to achieve and what the suitable methods and forms of learning to improve such competences are according to them.

**Survey method:** questionnaire

**Structure of the questionnaire:**

The questionnaire consisted of four parts:

- A. Identification data.
- B. Current competences.
- C. Level of competences the business manager/entrepreneur would like to achieve.
- D. Methods and forms of acquiring competences.

**Questionnaire scale:**

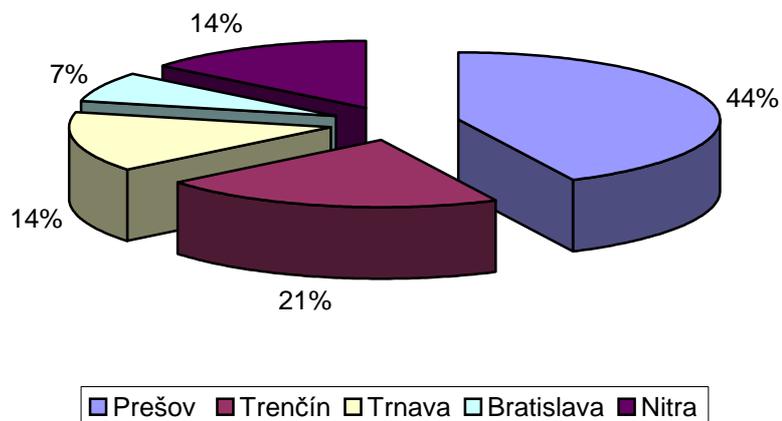
The questionnaire scale has four levels:

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>definitely disagree</b>	<b>rather disagree</b>	<b>rather agree</b>	<b>definitely agree</b>

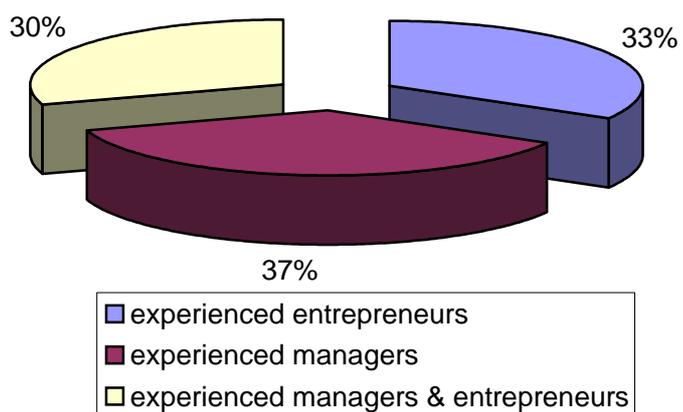
**Conclusions of the survey compiled by:** PhDr. Katarína Ikrényiová, A-OMEGA,s.r.o.

## A. Identification data

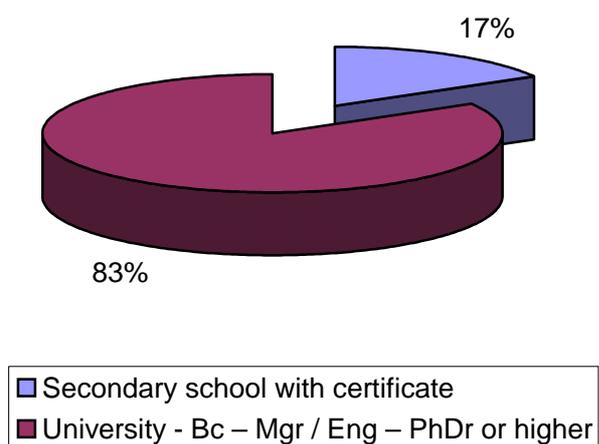
### Survey sample by region



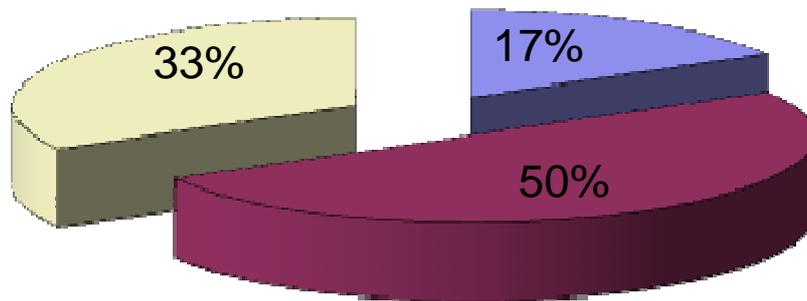
### Composition of the survey sample of experienced business entrepreneurs and managers



### Survey participants by achieved education

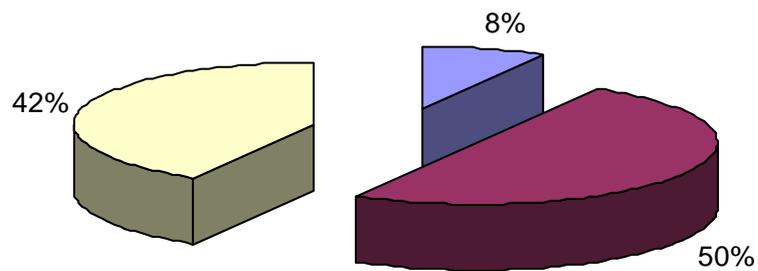


## Survey participants by company size



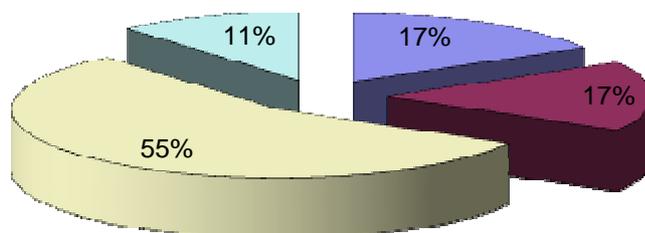
■ Micro company (less than 10 employees)

## Companies from which the survey participants came



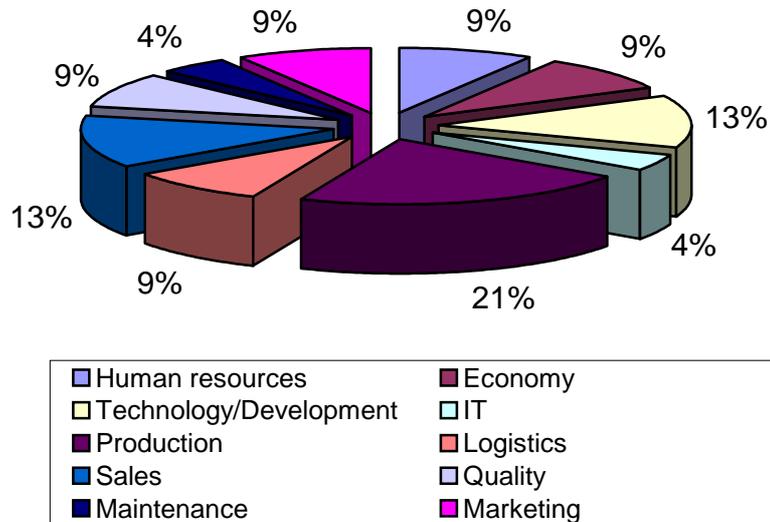
- are part of a global network of companies
- are part of a European network of companies
- are not part of an international network of companies

## Survey participants by the number of years spent in business or management



- od 3-5 rokov
- od 5-8 rokov
- od 8-15 rokov
- nad 15 rokov

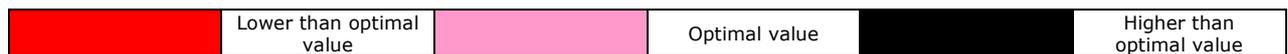
**Survey participants by management or business field**



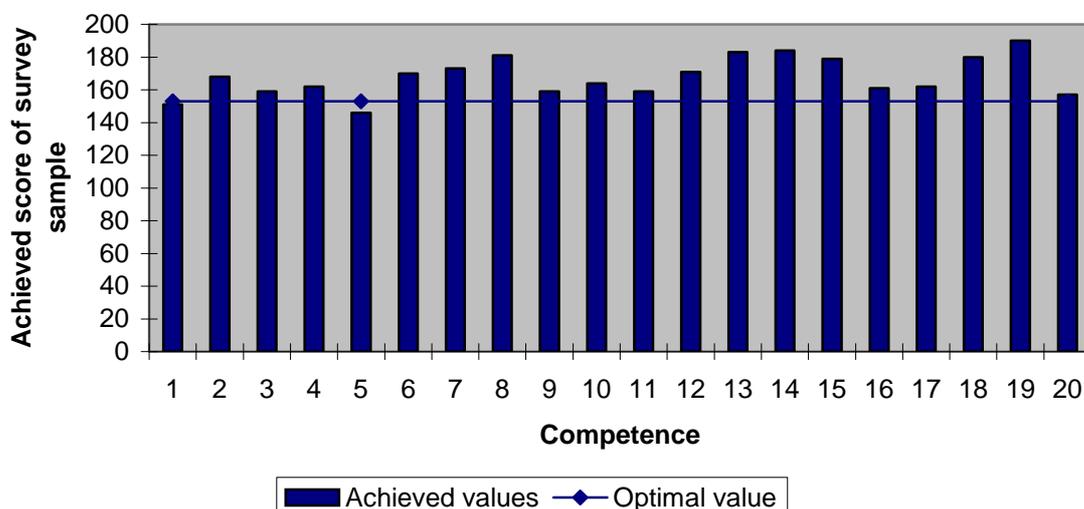
**An experienced business entrepreneur/manager is considered to be a business entrepreneur/manager who has owned/managed a small or medium size business in the EU for more than 3 years.**

**B. The results of the current level of managerial and entrepreneurial competences of experienced business entrepreneurs and managers on the basis of the questionnaire method using the self-reflection of the selected test sample.**

Key to Table 1 below



**Current levels of competences by self-assessment - experienced/successful business entrepreneurs and managers**



Ordinal No.	Current value	Optimum	COMPETENCE NAME
1.	151	153	<b>Initiative</b>
2.	168	153	Innovation management
3.	169	153	Ability to solve problems and to take on risks
4.	162	153	Organisational flexibility
5.	146	153	<b>Self-confidence</b>
6.	170	153	Assertiveness
7.	173	153	Recognize opportunities and act accordingly
8.	181	153	Resistance to stress
9.	159	153	<b>Building networks and cooperation</b>
10.	164	153	Systematic planning
11.	159	153	<b>Knowledge in law and economics</b>
12.	171	153	Orientation on performance
13.	183	153	Awareness of high quality of work
14.	184	153	<b>Orientation on people</b>
15.	179	153	Interpersonal skills: communication and acceptance of differences
16.	161	153	<b>Personality skills: perseverance and ability to persuade</b>
17.	162	153	<b>Development of projects and their implementation</b>
18.	180	153	Searching for information
19.	190	153	<b>Ability to maintain relations with customers, sensitivity to customers</b>
20.	157	153	<b>Use of influence strategies</b>

## Results

### 1. Lower than optimal value

The experienced business entrepreneurs and managers involved in the survey sample achieved lower than optimal evaluation in the **"Initiative"** competence. Given the fact that it is a purely entrepreneurial competence, one can state that it was the entrepreneurs who achieved a lower score in that competence than managers.

**Recommended actions:** Coaching in the company.

**Note on the results:** most of the business entrepreneurs in the sample have been in business for more than 10 years, with which the burnout syndrome arrives, which causes lower initiative.

The **"Self-confidence"** competence has been identified as an entrepreneurial as well as managerial competence. The survey sample also assessed it lower than the optimal values are. It is therefore necessary to increase that competence. In the survey sample it was the managers who achieved a lower score based on self-assessment.

**Recommended actions:** trainings, trainings combined with mentoring, coaching at the workplace

**Note on the results:** Managers and entrepreneurs tend to slide towards unhealthy self-importance but they do not strengthen their self-confidence. In this context, self-confidence is understood as: *The ability not to be afraid of risks connected with doing business/managing and relying on own opportunities and capabilities; an optimistic look at successful coping with the set out objectives.*

## **2. Slightly higher values than the optimal value, but such that may move downwards with a larger sample and even may get below the optimal score**

**In two competences**, which are also managerial as well as entrepreneurial ones, the evaluation in the selected sample of respondents got close to the optimum. In a larger sample it could be expected that the values would move downwards. **"The building of networks and cooperation"** and **"Personality skills: perseverance and ability to persuade"** are competences that currently should not be missing in managers or entrepreneurs. Despite that, on the basis of the self-assessment, the experienced managers and entrepreneurs evaluated themselves relatively low.

**Recommended actions:** Both competences can be improved through trainings, but also through mentoring/tutoring at the workplace.

**Note on the results:** The respondents - entrepreneurs showed a lower willingness to cooperate between companies (e.g. of similar specialisation/competition), but also between departments within the company (managers).

The **"Development of projects and their implementation"** competence is mostly a managerial competence, which, within the survey participants' self-assessment, ended up just above the optimal level limit. Given the fact that in every (even a small company) the need of project management is increasingly being established, we recommend to improve that competence in particular for the managers.

### **Recommended actions:**

- Self-learning (distance learning, e-learning);
- Workshops and lectures (including international and national workshops and conferences);
- Work in joint projects with other companies or work in project management in the company.

**Note on the results:** On the basis of the self-assessment, in that area, the business entrepreneurs achieved a more positive score than the managers, despite the fact that that competence is more managerial than entrepreneurial.

In the mostly entrepreneurial competence **"Knowledge of law and economics"** the business managers and entrepreneurs achieved only a slightly higher evaluation than the optimal one. The fact that that competence was found to be higher in the managers than in the entrepreneurs does not say anything about the fact that in a larger sample of respondents it can show differently.

### **Recommended actions for business entrepreneurs:**

- Self-education (distance learning, e-learning);
- Workshops and lectures (including international and national workshops and conferences);
- Self-study, reading, searching for information, etc.

**Note on the results:** In the case of entrepreneurs who have been on the market for a longer time, the evaluation of that competence improves significantly. Entrepreneurs operating on the market for a longer time also use specialised services (in law and economics) and, to some extent, the operation in such environment (real daily practice and experience with solving problems in the given area) forms and enriches them.

**"Use of influence strategies"** – That competence is perceived as follows: *It is an ability to influence others in achieving organisational objectives. An essential part is also the understanding how other people and situations influence us. The entrepreneur becomes the leader for others due to his managerial position.*

In the case of experienced entrepreneurs, on the basis of their self-assessment, the score nears the optimum. It is therefore essential, in particular in the case of entrepreneurs, to strengthen that competence.

### **Recommended actions for the business entrepreneurs:**

It is necessary to provide trainings for the business entrepreneurs and also to combine them with coaching.

**Note on the results:** Such trainings are also called **LEADERSHIP** in practice.

### **3. A high value, nearing the point maximum**

The highest values, nearing the maximum, were achieved **in that sample** of respondents in the managerial competence of **"Orientation on people"** and in common managerial and entrepreneurial competences of **"Ability to maintain relations with customers, sensitivity to customers"**. It is necessary to point out that that evaluation with a high score is the result of the respondents' own self-assessment (self-evaluation).

### **C. The results of the desirable level of managerial and entrepreneurial competences of experienced business entrepreneurs and managers on the basis of a questionnaire method using the self-reflection of the selected test sample.**

When comparing the **desirable level and the current self-assessment** within the entrepreneurial and managerial competences of the selected sample of experienced business managers and entrepreneurs, based on the table below it is possible state the following:

Experienced business managers and entrepreneurs in that sample **over-valued** themselves in the following competences: 5 – Self-confidence, 6 – Assertiveness, 7 – Recognize opportunities and act accordingly, 13 – awareness of high quality of work, 14 – Orientation on people, 15 – Interpersonal skills: communication and acceptance of differences, 17 – development of projects and their implementation.

**The term over-valued** means biased self-assessment of the current state of competences by the survey sample of experienced managers and entrepreneurs compared to the desirable state (*lower value of the desired state than the value of the current state*). **Despite the biased self-assessment** of the business entrepreneurs and managers, the desirable level of competences in most cases moves around the optimal value, or a higher than optimal value, with the exception of **two competences**, specifically: **competence 5 – Self-confidence and competence 17 – Development of projects and their implementation**. It is recommended that even experienced managers and entrepreneurs develop in those competences. **That is just a confirmation of the proposals in parts B1 and B2 of this analysis.**

When comparing the **desirable level and the current self-assessment** within the entrepreneurial and managerial competences of the selected sample of experienced managers and business people, the most serious disproportion between the self-assessment and the desirable state was in **4 competences: competence 8 – Resistance to stress, 12 – Orientation on performance, 18 – Searching for information, 19 – ability to maintain relations with customers, sensitivity to customers**. Here the sample included into the survey wished for a significant regression.

**Conclusion:** This state speaks about a highly biased self-assessment in some competences in which the experienced business managers and entrepreneurs show some weaknesses and are unwilling to admit them. Within the evaluation of competence 19, the positive thing was that the sample of managers showed a bigger disproportion than that of entrepreneurs. Given the fact that the **desirable level** of

managers and entrepreneurs in those 4 competences is **slightly above the optimum**, it could be recommended to think whether it is necessary to develop those competences.

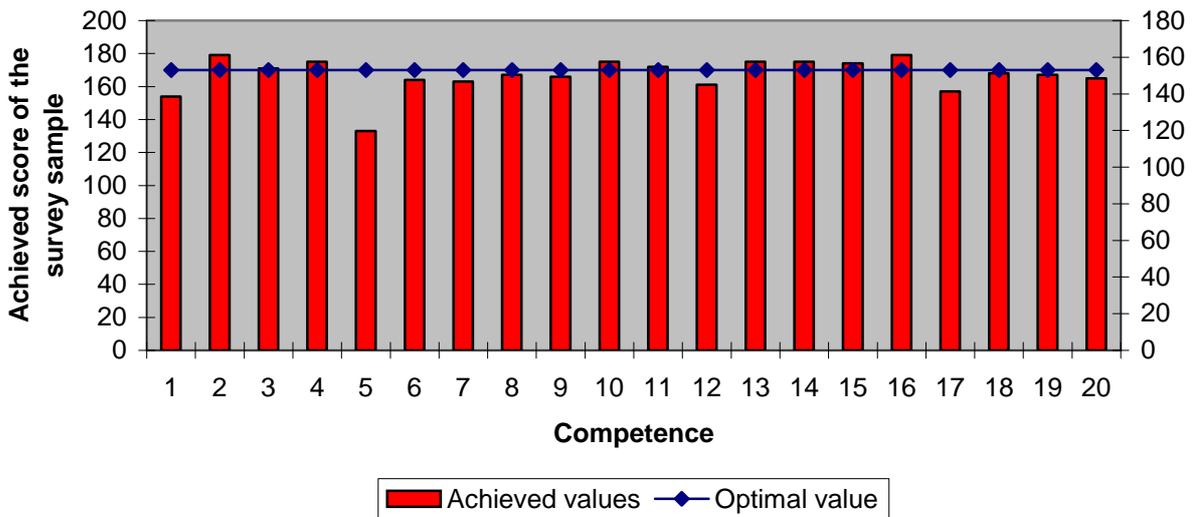
**Recommended actions for the business entrepreneurs and managers:**

Competence No.	Competence name	Learning methods
<b>8</b>	Resistance to stress	<input type="checkbox"/> Combination of trainings and mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching at the workplace
<b>12</b>	Orientation on performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring/tutoring at the workplace <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching at the workplace
<b>18</b>	Searching for information	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-study, reading, searching for information, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Self-education (distance learning, e-learning) <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops and lectures (including international and national workshops and conferences)
<b>19</b>	Ability to maintain relations with customers, sensitivity to customers	<input type="checkbox"/> Trainings to acquire skills (e.g. interpersonal) <input type="checkbox"/> Combination of trainings and mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Work in joint projects with other companies or work in project management in the company

Ordinal No.	Desirable value	Current value	Optimum	COMPETENCE NAME
1.	154	151	153	Initiative
2.	179	168	153	Innovation management
3.	171	169	153	Ability to solve problems and take on risks
4.	175	162	153	Organisational flexibility
5.	133	146	153	Self-confidence
6.	164	170	153	Assertiveness
7.	163	173	153	Recognise opportunities and act accordingly
<b>8.</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>Resistance to stress</b>
9.	166	159	153	Building networks and cooperation
10.	175	164	153	Systematic planning
11.	172	159	153	Knowledge of law and economics
<b>12.</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>Orientation on performance</b>
13.	175	183	153	Awareness of high quality of work
14.	175	184	153	Orientation on people
15.	174	179	153	Interpersonal skills: communication and acceptance of differences
16.	179	161	153	Personality skills: perseverance and ability to persuade
17.	157	162	153	Development of projects and their implementation
<b>18.</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>Searching for information</b>
<b>19.</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>Ability to maintain relations with customers, sensitivity to customers</b>
20.	165	157	153	Use of influence strategies

	A higher disproportion between the desirable and current states		A lower disproportion between the desirable and current states
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**Desirable levels of competences of the survey sample according to the self-assessment of experienced business managers and entrepreneurs**

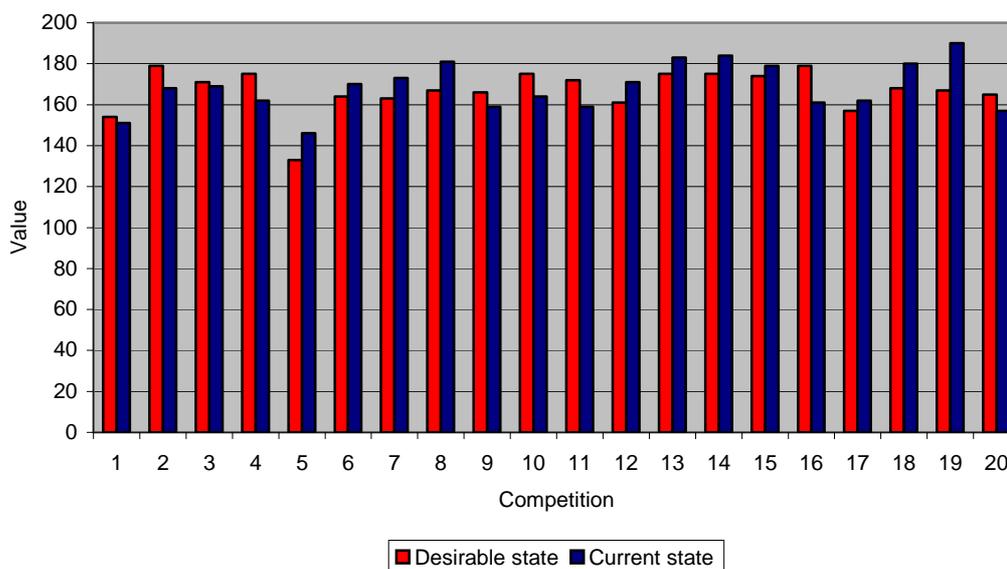


**Recommended actions for the entrepreneurs and managers:**

The table above also suggests a very substantial fact that the experienced business managers and entrepreneurs have a **strong motivation – wish –** to develop the competence No. 2 – **Innovation management – and the competence No. 16 – Personality skills: perseverance and ability to persuade. Which is necessary to build upon.** A suitable learning method for the competence No. 2 is the work in joint projects with other companies or work in project management in the company; a suitable method for the development of the competence No. 16 are trainings to acquire the skills.

*On the chart below it is possible to find out how big the disproportion between the current self-assessment (state) and the desirable state in experienced business managers and entrepreneurs within individual competences is.*

**Comparison between the desirable and current self-assessments of the experienced business managers and entrepreneurs**



## D. Methods of acquiring and improving competences

The higher the value of preferences in the table, the more the respondents consider the given method to be effective. Interactive methods appear to be more effective with the respondents than non-interactive ones. **In conclusion**, it is necessary to mention that the method is very closely related with the content and objective of learning, as well as with other factors. In the case of the experienced business managers and entrepreneurs, their knowledge systems are sufficiently developed; therefore they lean towards the use of methods through which they will improve their skills.

Self-study, reading, searching for information, etc.	5.16
Self-education (distance learning, e-learning)	5.18
Workshops and lectures (including international and national workshops and conferences)	5
Trainings to acquire skills (e.g. interpersonal)	6.3
Combination of trainings and mentoring	6.1
Combination of distance learning and consulting/mentoring	5.8
Mentoring/tutoring at the workplace	6.54
Coaching at the workplace	6.3
Work in joint projects with other companies or work in project management in the company.	8